

YOUTH IN CONFLICT WITH THE LAW: AN EXPLORATION OF SOCIO-CRIMINOGENIC RISK FACTORS

By

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Dedication

To my mother, Linda Lynette Phillips.

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Declaration

I, Ashwill Ramon Phillips declare that this dissertation is my own unaided work. All citations and references have been duly acknowledged. This dissertation is being submitted for the degree *Magister Artium* with specialisation in Criminology at the Department of Criminology, University of the Free State, Bloemfontein, South Africa. None of the present work has been submitted previously for any degree or examination at any other University or academic institution.



Signature

29 January 2019

Date

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ACRONYMS

ADAM	Arrestee Drug Abuse Monitoring Programme
ADD	Attention Deficit Disorder
CJA	Child Justice Act 75 of 2008
CJCP	Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention
CRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of a Child
DCS	Department of Correctional Services
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigations
JICS	Judicial Inspectorate for Correctional Services
NCPS	National Crime Prevention Strategy
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NICRO	National Institute for Crime Prevention and the Reintegration of Offenders
NSC	National Survey of Children
PTSD	Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
SAPS	South African Police Service
SASSA	South African Social Security Agency
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNISA	University of South Africa

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Summary

Criminal Justice in South Africa has endured a period of evolution, having progressed from colonialism to apartheid to democracy. Yet, law violations remain a fundamental challenge in contemporary South Africa. As what could have been seen during the past few years, the sheer number of transgressions committed by and against young people remains problematic, as individuals aged 12 to 22 years form part of a 'high risk' age cohort for both contravening the law and for criminal victimisation. As a result, a considerable proportion of the youth populace are pushed to the peripheries of South African society and experience a great degree of marginalisation within various domains, thereby amplifying their risk of coming into conflict with the law.

Moreover, a significant number of youth have already been negatively affected by challenges related to socio-economic disadvantage, limited opportunities for conventional success, family conflict and antisocial peer affiliation, while an equally high percentage of youth have been incarcerated for serious transgressions. These youth face numerous complications in terms of both their transition into adulthood, as well as on their journey to become responsible social actors. Accordingly, the current study was aimed at identifying and exploring socio-criminogenic risk factors within the family, school, community and peer group domain through the explanation and synthesis of the Strain, Subculture, Social Control and Social Learning perspectives, in order to gain a greater understanding of the personal experiences and views of detained youth with the ultimate aim of conflict reduction.

A qualitative methodological approach was utilised, together with research strategies of an exploratory and descriptive nature. Data was obtained using a purposive sample of 20 youth detained at the Kimberley Youth Development Centre. The findings obtained during the course of the study indicated that a significant proportion of youth in the sample were exposed to several key risk factors conducive to youth misconduct. These factors included antisocial peer affiliation (75%), participation in gang-related activities (65%), community or neighbourhood disorganisation (60%), the use of alcohol and illicit substances (60%) and the experience of socio-economic disadvantage (55%). An evaluation of commonly recurring clusters of risk factors identified gang membership (55%) and the use of alcohol and illicit substances (50%)

as the most prominent socio-criminogenic risk factors experienced by the participants in the sample.

On the basis of these findings, it is evident that further research pertaining to the criminogenic risk factors for youth misconduct in the South African context is required. With reference to the recommendations in the current study, it is envisaged that the findings will stimulate future research conducted with all-inclusive population-representative samples, which could potentially aid in the identification of universal risk factors experienced by the majority of South African youth in conflict with the law. Research utilising a control group, longitudinal research and research including female youth and those under the age of 18 years, would be particularly valuable in this regard. Furthermore, future research would facilitate the expansion of knowledge regarding criminogenic risk factors for youth misconduct, to contribute to the development of new policies and procedures and/or to the modification of existing policies and intervention programmes, with the reduction of conflict as ultimate aim.

Key Terms

Youth, Youth at Risk, Youth in Conflict with the Law, Youth Misconduct, Criminogenic Risk Factors, Static Risk Factors, Dynamic Risk Factors, Protective Factors

CHAPTER 1: GENERAL ORIENTATION AND PROBLEM FORMULATION

In order to explore the relationship between exposure to socio-criminogenic risk factors and the subsequent influence on behaviour, it is imperative to begin the study with a basic orientation to the key concepts. This will include definitions of various important terms which will be operationalised for the purposes of this study. A discussion on the historical perspective on youth misconduct and the development of child justice will serve as a contextual background for the presentation of the research problem. The rationale for the study will also be presented with reference to the specific aims of the study.

1.1. Introduction

Criminal Justice in South Africa has endured a period of evolution, having progressed from colonialism to apartheid to democracy. Yet, law violations remain a fundamental challenge in contemporary South Africa (Demombynes & Özler, 2005: 265). As what could have been seen during the past few years, the sheer number of transgressions committed by and against young people remains problematic, as individuals aged 12 to 22 years form part of a 'high risk' age cohort for both contravening the law and for criminal victimisation (Burton, Leoschut & Bonora, 2009: xiii; Clark, 2012: 77; Khan & Singh, 2014: 105).

Circa 31 May 2010, 57 145 youth aged between 14 and 25 years have been detained in South African correctional facilities, the majority (28 390) having been convicted for crimes of aggression. These statistics indicate that roughly 35.4% of all correctional clients in South Africa during this period, were under the age of 25 years (Clark, 2012: 78; Department of Correctional Services South Africa, 2010). This number declined slightly during the 2011/2012 book-year to 52 182, which suggests that approximately 32.5% of all correctional clients during this period were under the age of 25 years (Department of Correctional Services, 2012). By 2014, there were 31 137 sentenced youth (18 to 25 years) and 541 sentenced children (under 18 years). The crime categories for both groups are similar and are ranked as follows: 1) Aggressive offences, 2) Economic offences, 3) Sexual offences, 4) Other offences, and 5) Narcotic-related offences. The category 'Other offences' refers to social fabric crimes such as public intoxication or trespassing, as well as offences such as kidnapping, the possession of an unlicensed firearm, the possession of burglary tools and malicious

damage to property (Peacock, 2006: 90). An exposition of the number of sentenced and un-sentenced youth within the age-group 18 to 25 years is provided in Table 1 below, based on the aforementioned crime categories (Jules-Macquet, 2014: 10):

Table 1
Number of sentenced and un-sentenced youth based on crime categories

Crime	Un-sentenced	Sentenced	Total	Un-sentenced	Sentenced	Total
Economic	7 211	9 099	16 310	32%	29%	30%
Aggressive	11 118	15 766	26 884	49%	51%	50%
Sexual	2 818	4 160	6 978	12%	13%	13%
Narcotics	645	622	1 267	3%	2%	2%
Other	942	1 490	2 432	4%	5%	5%
Total	22 734	31 137	53 871	100%	100%	100%

(Jules-Macquet, 2014: 10).

More recent statistics obtained from the 2014/2015 *Annual Report of the Judicial Inspectorate for Correctional Services* (JICS), indicate that roughly 24 656 sentenced inmates fall within the said youth category (Judicial Inspectorate of Prisons, 2015: 48). Of these 24 656 sentenced inmates, 3% (819) are serving life sentences and an estimated 13 583 (close to 50% of the total youth prison population) are serving sentences ranging from five years to life imprisonment (Judicial Inspectorate of Prisons, 2015: 48). For the period 2015/2016, the population has remained relatively similar, with a slight increase amongst both those sentenced and on remand (Judicial Inspectorate of Prisons, 2016: 44).

As is evident from Table 1 above, youth in the age group of 18 to 25 years more commonly perpetrate serious offences, with the majority of offences (50%) being aggressive crimes. A large number of youth also commit economic (16 310) and sexual offences (6 978). In this regard, one can therefore deduce that a sizeable proportion of the youth populace are at high risk of being sentenced to direct incarceration for sentences ranging from murder and assault, to rape and armed

robbery. This in turn, means that correctional facilities are burdened with the crucial task of catering to the unique needs of young people in its care.

This is supported in the 2014/2015 *Annual Report of the Judicial Inspectorate for Correctional Services*, which emphasises the need for adequate and effective rehabilitation and life-skills training during incarceration, in order to ensure that the majority of youth in conflict with the law are successfully rehabilitated and reintegrated into their respective families and communities (Judicial Inspectorate of Prisons, 2015: 48). It is therefore essential that any rehabilitative or therapeutic programmes offered by correctional facilities, address those unique factors which influence and motivate young people to engage in law-violating behaviour.

With reference to large-scale social disorganisation, unemployment and poverty in contemporary South Africa (Khan & Singh, 2014: 109), it is essential to gain a better understanding of the socio-criminogenic risk factors that motivate and contribute to the commission of a crime, with particular reference to law violations committed by youthful transgressors. This study therefore aims to explore the specific nature of the socio-criminogenic risk factors to which youth are exposed, in order to contribute to a better understanding of this vulnerable segment of the population within society, and to the development of efficient and effective policies and programmes pertaining to youth in conflict with law, with the reduction of conflict as aim.

1.2. Conceptualisation

To gain a better understanding of the relationship between the exposure to socio-criminogenic risk factors and its effect on subsequent law-violating behaviour, the following discussion will elucidate the concepts central to this study.

1.2.1. Youth

Defining the term *youth* is often a challenging and arduous task as its meaning may vary depending on the respective country or area in question (Khan & Singh, 2014: 106). Yet, in order to fully appreciate this unique and distinct phase of life-span development, it is essential to first gain an understanding of the position of children in society. Accordingly, Peacock (2006: 5) notes that *children* by their very definition, should be considered as different from adults. Not only are they younger, they are also

presumably less accountable for their behaviour and are generally more open to change.

This corresponds with Yehia (2007: 2) and Gallinetti (2009: 18) who have highlighted several reasons why it is essential to take cognisance of the age of young persons in conflict with the law:

- I. Adolescents are more exposed to negative influences and external strain;
- II. In comparison to adults, the character of adolescents is not as well developed;
- III. The personality traits displayed by adolescents tend to be more transient;
- IV. Adolescents are more vulnerable to immature and irresponsible behaviour, as such they should be deemed less morally blameworthy for their behaviour;
- V. Adolescents have greater prospects for reformation; and
- VI. Due to their personality traits being more transient, reckless and irresponsible behaviour may generally subside as the individual matures.

The international youth movement specialist, Vladimir Kultygin (Khan & Singh, 2014: 106) concurs and notes that “although youth is universal as a definite stage in life, its social status has a concrete historical and class nature and depends on the social system, culture, socialisation processes and mechanisms intrinsic to a given society as a whole, and also on the concrete class and stratum to which this category of the populace belongs.” Siegel (2002: 3) affirms this by noting that youth and concomitant adolescence is a time of trial and uncertainty as it can be regarded as the stage of development in which young people undergo rapid biological, social and identity development.

Subsequently, the term *youth* or *adolescence* can be defined from a biological, social and psychological perspective (Peacock, 2006: 3). In terms of the biological perspective, a factor which should be considered in the definition, are the biological changes related to puberty as a precondition. The social perspective emphasises the status and role expectations relating to the adolescent, where he/she is not yet regarded as (nor given the status of) an adult, nor a child. Whilst the psychological perspective highlights the process of identity development, and the manner in which an individual perceives themselves in relation to their social environment (Peacock, 2006: 3).

Similar to the viewpoints of Kulygin (Khan & Singh, 2014: 106) and Peacock (2006: 3), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) refers to *youth* and *adolescence* as a “fluid category” rather than a set age-group, defining it as a transitional and vulnerable phase in which an individual advances from the dependence of childhood to the independence of adulthood; also acquiring an awareness of their interdependence as members of a community (UNESCO, 2016).

Domestically, the National Youth Commission Act of 1996 defines *youth* as any persons between the age of 14 to 35 years (Khan & Singh, 2014: 106). Whilst to achieve uniformity across different regions each with varying definitions, the United Nations (UN) refer to *youth* as any persons between the age of 15 and 24 years, ‘without prejudice to other definitions by Member States’ (UNESCO, 2016). Based on these varying definitions and taking into account the dynamic nature of this particular stage of development, numerous researchers agree that adolescence typically occurs between 12 and 22 years of age (Khan & Singh, 2014: 106; Peacock, 2006: 4; Peacock, 2009: 346).

However, despite the general consensus among researchers, one of the major factors contributing to the growth in the number of youth being sentenced to incarceration, is the inability to comprehensively identify the exact end of childhood and the beginning of adulthood. This inability to distinguish the completion of adolescence from the start of adulthood, can be seen as a contributing factor to the growth in the number of incarcerated youth, as specific legislative frameworks apply only to specific age-groups (i.e. The Child Justice Act, Act 75 of 2008).

The changeover from adolescence to adulthood is usually marked by events such as marriage, cultural initiation and physical or emotional maturity. This lack of standardisation is thus often overlooked in the South African legal framework, where children aged 14 to 17 years are presumed to have refutable criminal responsibility and any person over the age of 18 years is regarded as an adult (Bezuidenhout, 2013: 27). Peacock (2009: 346) supports this argument and notes the “arbitrariness of criminal law in relation to lifespan development” in its attempt to establish the stage at which a person is a child or an adult.

For the purpose of this study however, the terms *youth*, *adolescent* and *juvenile* will be used interchangeably to refer to persons between the ages of 18 to 22 years as

this corresponds to the various definitions as cited above, but also because this is the age group characterised as 'youth' according to the policy framework of the Department of Correctional Services (DCS).

1.2.2. Youth at risk

The term *youth at risk* is synonymous with terms such as 'problem youth' or 'high-risk youth' and is generally used to describe adolescents who encounter drawbacks or difficulties early on in their lives (Schonert-Reichl, 2000: 3; Swahn & Bossarte, 2009: 224). The term is commonly used to characterise young people who are socio-economically disadvantaged, engage in 'sexually promiscuous' behaviour, use or abuse alcohol and illicit substances, or live in high crime-rate areas. It may also be used in a broader context to refer to adolescents who have diminished prospects of maturing into responsible adults, those who are unable to sustain long-term relationships or support themselves financially, and those with a higher probability of engaging in law-violating behaviour (Schonert-Reichl, 2000: 5).

It is very important to distinguish between instances where youth are simply at risk of transgressing and instances where young people are or have already transgressed. Previously, young people who transgressed were referred to as 'juvenile delinquents', a term which may lead to negative labelling practices and the stigmatisation of the individual involved (Tannenbaum, 1938: 19; Williams & McShane, 2014: 115). More recently, young people clashing with the law are referred to as 'youth in conflict with the law', as this term diminishes the possibility of negative stereotyping which may often motivate adolescents' to contravene the law, as negative labelling may alter the self-image and cause people to react to the tag rather than to the person (Tannenbaum, 1938: 19; Williams & McShane, 2014: 115).

Brown (2005: 38) supports this and states that negative labelling practices may make it more difficult for youth in conflict with the law to engage fully in an intervention programme, as negative labels may delay change and make it more difficult to accept responsibility. Peacock (2008: 63) furthers this by stating that negative labelling practices may also promote negative identity formation as the adolescent may incorporate societal reactions towards behaviour into his/her identity.

Youth at risk of conflicting with the law or those who have already transgressed, may also have done so for a variety of reasons ranging from poor academic achievement to deviant peer group association. In this regard, it is equally important to reflect on the term *risk factors* and *criminogenic risk factors* respectively.

1.2.3. Risk factors

According to McCord, Widom and Crowell (2001: 66) disruptive and unlawful behaviour is generally “the result of a complex interplay of individual biological and genetic factors and environmental factors, starting during foetal development and continuing throughout life”. With reference to the aforementioned explanation, it is possible to draw a distinction between the terms *risk factor* and *criminogenic risk factor*.

Risk factors can be defined as characteristics unique to an individual or their social environment which increases the probability of behavioural misconduct, and are regarded as characteristics or hazards that make an individual more susceptible or prone to displaying or engaging in deviant and/or anti-social behaviour (Andrews, Bonta & Hoge, 1990: 49; Bezuidenhout, 2013: 69; Bezuidenhout & Joubert, 2008: 56; De Souza da Silveira, Maruschi & Bazon, 2012: 348; Lösel & Farrington, 2012: 8; Phillips & Maritz, 2015: 54; Walsh & Ellis, 2007: 233).

Risk factors therefore refer to any internal or external conditions which may contribute to a child or young person developing behavioural problems during adolescence. Risk factors, however, are more commonly associated with deviance rather than with criminal behaviour. In this regard, deviance would entail behaviour which is deemed as socially unacceptable but within the bounds of what is legally permitted, while criminal behaviour would entail any behaviour which is prohibited by the state. Risk factors may therefore not essentially be regarded as a direct cause of deviance, but should rather be viewed as unique factors which may lead to a heightened risk of engaging in or displaying socially unacceptable and deviant behaviour.

For the purpose of this study, the term *risk factor* will therefore be used to refer to biological, environmental and/or social factors which contribute to the initiation or continuation of socially unacceptable or deviant behaviour.

1.2.4. Criminogenic risk factors

Criminogenic risk factors refer to risk factors which are explicitly linked to unlawfulness and which may enhance the likelihood of criminal and/or violent misconduct (Bezuidenhout, 2013: 69; Phillips & Maritz, 2015: 54). These factors may come to the fore on a social or individual level and are comprised of various components which include static risk factors, dynamic risk factors and protective factors. These components are defined in the succeeding section.

1.2.4.1. Static risk factors

Static risk factors are those factors which are untreatable, and either cannot change or changes only in one direction. These factors typically cannot change as they have already occurred (i.e. having committed prior transgressions) and thus they remain unchanged over time. They may also change in only one direction (i.e. age) as one can only become older. Static risk factors which are commonly linked to law-violating behaviour include being male, the age at first arrest, youthfulness, large family size, poor parental supervision, the number of previous transgressions, past difficulties related to substance abuse and prior mental health issues (Bonta & Andrews, 2007: 5; James, 2015: 3). These factors all have the potential to increase the risk of anti-social and/or law-violating behaviour.

For the purpose of the current study, the term *static risk factor* will be used to refer to actions or occurrences which are unresponsive to change, and which cannot be altered by external influences or interventions.

1.2.4.2. Dynamic risk factors

According to Bezuidenhout (2013: 69) and Bezuidenhout and Joubert (2008: 56), *dynamic risk factors* (also referred to as *criminogenic needs*) are those factors which are closely linked to misconduct. These factors are associated with existing behaviour and refer to social issues or environmental conditions that may change, such as unemployment, educational level, residing in high crime-rate neighbourhoods, illicit substance abuse and antisocial peer group association. Additionally, a number of micro-level or individual factors such as impulsivity, antisocial personality characteristics, aggression or having a lack of empathy are included. Dynamic risk

factors are treatable and can be modified in order to reduce the probability of antisocial and/or unlawful behaviour (James, 2015: 3).

Accordingly, the term *dynamic risk factor* will be used to refer to behaviours, attitudes, beliefs or experiences which directly contribute to law-violating behaviour, and for which treatment or training is generally prescribed in order to reduce the negative outcome related to these risk factors.

1.2.4.3. Protective factors

Protective factors do not merely indicate the absence of risk factors (i.e. not associating with deviant peers or not experiencing family turmoil). These factors also function differently to static and dynamic risk factors as they do not increase the risk of unlawfulness, but rather protects an individual against the negative impact of other static or dynamic risk factors (Arthur, Hawkins, Pollard, Catalano & Baglioni, 2002: 576; De Souza da Silveira, et. al., 2012: 348). These factors enhance resilience and serve as an explanation for why certain youth do not engage in antisocial or unlawful behaviour, even when exposed to a myriad of criminogenic risk factors.

Traditionally, protective factors include being female, having supportive relationships with parents or peers, being committed to school, having friends who engage in pro-social activities and behaviour, as well as living in a stable and organised neighbourhood. Protective factors such as these, all serve as a buffer against the negative influence of criminogenic risk factors. These factors are thus crucial with regard to the development of rehabilitative and re-integrative programmes offered to youth at risk or youth in conflict with the law (Bezuidenhout, 2013: 70).

For the purpose of this study, *protective factors* will refer to interactions, beliefs, attitudes, experiences or relationships which mediate or reduce the effects of exposure to criminogenic risk factors.

1.2.4.4. Socio-criminogenic risk factors

As stated previously, criminogenic risk factors can be grouped into *individual-* and *socio-criminogenic risk factors*, each category being further sub-divided. Socio-criminogenic risk factors are wide-ranging (i.e. macro or broad-level risk factors) which generally affects a group of people as opposed to one individual. Socio-criminogenic risk factors can be categorised into four interdependent domains which are comprised

of risk factors within the family, community, school and peer group contexts (Bartol, 2002: 38; Phillips & Maritz, 2015: 54).

Each of the aforementioned domains are composed of various factors ranging from poor parental supervision, to academic failure, to deviant peer-associations and social disorganisation. All of which could potentially increase the risk that an individual or group may display antisocial and/or law-violating behaviour, as is demonstrated in Table 2 below which illustrates the most common socio-criminogenic risk factors, organised in terms of the age of onset:

Table 2
The most common socio-criminogenic risk factors

Risk Factor		
Domain	Early Onset (ages 6 – 11)	Late Onset (ages 12 – 14)
Family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Low socio-economic status ▪ Poverty ▪ Anti-social parents ▪ Harsh or lax discipline ▪ Abusive parents ▪ Neglect 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Inconsistent discipline ▪ Poor supervision ▪ Anti-social parents ▪ Low socio-economic status ▪ Abusive parents ▪ Family conflict ▪ Low parental involvement ▪ Harsh or lax discipline
School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Poor attitude ▪ Poor performance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Poor attitude ▪ Poor performance ▪ Academic failure
Peer group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Weak social ties ▪ Anti-social peers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Weak social ties ▪ Anti-social/delinquent peers ▪ Gang membership
Community		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Neighbourhood crime ▪ The use of illicit substances ▪ Neighbourhood disorganisation ▪ Poverty

(Adapted from Bezuidenhout, 2013: 70; Shader, 2001: 4).

According to Bezuidenhout (2013: 70) and Shader (2001: 4), socio-criminogenic risk factors are interdependent, meaning that a variable presenting in one domain (i.e. the family) would have a high probability of affecting variables in another domain (i.e. the school). Hence, the argument could be made that if an individual is from a family where physical abuse is rife; he/she may become desensitised, thus viewing violent behaviour as a norm, or as an acceptable way of solving problems or reaching social goals. This may then spill over into the school context, and the individual may subsequently utilise violence to resolve disputes with peers or to gain status. A socio-criminogenic risk factor such as witnessing or experiencing aggression and violence is therefore a social and health concern as constant experiences of violence in the home, community or on television, could lead to the perception of violence as a norm. Individuals would then fail to conform to cultural norms and values, consequently creating anomie within society.

The same can be said of risk factors occurring in all four domains. Therefore events occurring in the peer group context may influence the way an individual conducts themselves in the family, school or community and vice versa. It is important to keep in mind that the presence of any one risk factor is not always sufficient to produce law-violating behaviour. However, the greater the number of risk factors present, the more significant the effect on behaviour will be (Hawkins, Herrenkohl, Farrington, Brewer, Catalano, Harachi & Cothorn, 2000: 7). Other researchers concur with Hawkins, et. al. (2000: 7), by noting various studies which indicate a greater likelihood for individuals to develop serious deviant and unlawful behaviour when more criminogenic risk factors are present, as opposed to the presence of only one or two risk factors (Harder, Knorth & Kalverboer, 2015: 1059; Loeber, Slot, van der Laan & Hoeve, 2008: 147).

For the purpose of this study, the term *socio-criminogenic risk factor* will be used to refer to interactions, beliefs, attitudes, experiences, relationships or behaviours pertaining to the family, school, community or peer group contexts, which may heighten the risk of coming into conflict with the law, and for which treatment or training should be prescribed in order to reduce conflict and promote successful rehabilitation and societal reintegration.

1.2.4.5. Individual Risk Factors

Individual criminogenic risk factors are micro-level or narrow-level risk factors which pertain only to a specific person as opposed to a community or group of individuals. These risk factors refer to aspects such as biographic features (i.e. age, gender, ethnicity), biosocial features (i.e. diet, brain function, genetic make-up, hormonal influences), psychosocial characteristics (i.e. intelligence, personality traits, psychological conditions) and health-related factors (i.e. brain tumours, epilepsy or other physical ailments which could affect an individual's behaviour) (Bezuidenhout, 2013: 85; Van der Hoven, 2001: 89). Table 3 below presents a classification of the most common individual risk factors, organised in terms of the age of onset:

Table 3
The most common individual risk factors

Risk Factor		
Domain	Early Onset (ages 6–11)	Late Onset (ages 12–14)
Individual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ General unlawfulness ▪ Substance abuse ▪ Being Male ▪ Aggression ▪ Hyperactivity ▪ Exposure to violence ▪ Anti-social behaviour ▪ Low IQ ▪ Dishonesty ▪ Health problems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Restlessness ▪ Difficulty concentrating ▪ Risk-taking ▪ Aggression ▪ Physical violence ▪ Being male ▪ Anti-social behaviour ▪ Crimes against persons ▪ Low IQ ▪ Substance abuse

(Adapted from Bezuidenhout, 2013: 70; Shader, 2001: 4).

Both individual and socio-criminogenic risk factors may increase the probability of law-violating behaviour, having a more significant effect on behaviour when a greater number of risk factors are present. The potential result being a greater number of youth coming into conflict with the law, or being incarcerated for various transgressions. Due to the rather extensive nature of criminogenic risk factors, this study will focus solely on the socio-criminogenic risk factors which may have contributed to the unlawful

behaviour of the participants in the sample, by exploring the unique experiences and perceptions of youth with regard to these factors.

1.2.5. Incarceration

Incarceration involves the entry, confinement and detention of an individual in a correctional centre for a specific period as determined by a court of law (Terblanche, 2007: 211). Currently, there are 243 active correctional centres across South Africa. Of these, nine centres accommodate female detainees exclusively, fourteen centres make provision for youth aged between 18 and 25 years, and 129 centres accommodate males only (Judicial Inspectorate of Prisons, 2016: 44). The confinement, treatment and release of an inmate is regulated by the Correctional Services Act 111 of 1998, the purpose being to punish the inmate, deter him/her from the commission of further transgressions and to promote rehabilitation and societal reintegration (Terblanche, 2007: 211).

Even though the purpose of incarceration is threefold (Correctional Services Act 111 of 1998), rehabilitation is often *emphasised* in the case of youth in conflict with the law, as they are regarded as having higher prospects of being successfully rehabilitated and reintegrated into their families and communities (Gallinetti, 2009: 18; Peacock, 2006: 5; Yehia, 2007: 2). In this regard, rehabilitation may be viewed as synonymous with the 'treatment' and 'training' of inmates, as provided for in section 2(2)(b) of the Correctional Services Act 111 of 1998, which refers to treatment as the reformation and rehabilitation of inmates and to training as the teaching of new "habits", specifically those of "industry and labour" (Van Zyl Smit, 1992: 108).

For treatment and training to be successful, it is imperative that any rehabilitative or therapeutic programme offered by correctional centres, address the unique factors which motivated or contributed to the law-violating behaviour of the transgressor. Thereby, accentuating the value of exploring the presence and influence of socio-criminogenic risk factors, an objective supported in the *2014/2015 Annual Report of the Judicial Inspectorate for Correctional Services*, which stresses the necessity for adequate and effective rehabilitation and life-skills training, in order to ensure that the majority of youth in conflict with the law are successfully reintegrated into their respective families and communities (Judicial Inspectorate of Prisons, 2015: 48). It is therefore essential that any rehabilitative/therapeutic programmes presented to youth

in conflict with the law, addresses the unique socio-criminogenic risk factors encountered by the youth. The following section will provide a brief history of the development of child justice, in order to highlight the importance of identifying and treating unique factors associated with behavioural misconduct.

1.3. A historical perspective on the development of child justice

Youth misbehaviour is unquestionably a major concern both internationally as well as domestically, regardless of which definition or method of measurement is used. Historically however, no such status as ‘child’ existed and literature made no distinction between youth and adult transgressors prior to 1831 (Whitehead & Lab, 2013: 25). Infanticide was commonly practiced in ancient Egypt, Rome, China, India and Europe during the Middle Ages, and the 16th and 17th centuries respectively. Similarly, child-rearing practices in England and America were classified as “cruel” and “inhumane”, often arising as a result of the *absence of legislation* to protect children. Moreover, children were regarded as either property or as persons with no separate status, distinct expectations or privileges (Whitehead & Lab, 2013: 26). From birth to six years, children had the same status as property and were purchased, traded and disposed of according to the needs of the owner.

After the age of six, children in Europe and America were regarded as ordinary members of society and were subjected to the same mandates placed on all adult citizens (Whitehead & Lab, 2013: 26). This absence of legislation to protect children, meant that once a child reached the age of six years they were assumed to have criminal responsibility and consequently, the same degree of punishment was imposed in comparison to their adult counterparts. Rehabilitation and societal reintegration as a specific objective of punishment was generally ignored, which essentially meant that insufficient attention was given to identifying and treating the unique socio-criminogenic risk factors which may have contributed to children coming into conflict with the law during this period.

1.3.1. Pre-colonial practices and African customary law

With reference to the African Continent, childhood was not defined by age under African customary law during the pre-colonial era, but rather by rites of passage such as circumcision or the setting up of a separate household (Skelton & Tshehla, 2008: 29). Collective responsibility was also regarded as a fundamental principle of African

customary law. This meant that the community in its entirety was involved in the application of the law, as the damage caused was seen to be a transgression against the community as a whole. In cases where youth transgressed, the principles of restorative justice were applied by elders and community leaders, with the aim of restoring harmony between the victim and transgressor, as well as within the community (Maithufi, 2000: 140). Even though this African customary approach was primarily restorative in nature, socio-criminogenic risk factors encountered by youth in conflict with the law was still largely neglected, thus obstructing the rehabilitative process.

No incarceration or institutionalisation of any kind existed, and transgressions committed by children or youth were regarded as injustices between individuals and families, and as such had to be resolved in a way that promoted unity and wellbeing in society (Skelton & Tshehla, 2008: 29). What happened to children and the manner in which their problematic behaviour was dealt with, was also related to the collective welfare of the extended family, group or tribe. Children's interests were thus subordinate to the broader interests of the community (Bezuidenhout, 2013: 19). This meant that although disputes were resolved, children and their interests were still seen as secondary to that of the broader community, indicating that the importance of identifying and addressing socio-criminogenic risk factors in order to further rehabilitation and societal reintegration, was disregarded by the African customary law system.

When South Africa was colonised, this African customary legal system and its approach to juvenile misconduct was replaced by English and Roman-Dutch legal systems with more punitive forms of justice (Skelton & Tshehla, 2008: 29). Corporal punishment, deportation and incarceration for transgressions then became common methods for dealing with, and punishing youth in conflict with the law. Skelton and Tshehla (2008: 30) concur and assert that "...whilst the welfarist approach gained favour worldwide, the South African child justice regime was based on the retributive approach which was largely punitive. Children who transgressed had to receive their just desserts like their adult counterparts, with the difference being in the locus (place) of punishment".

This meant that all children who were older than seven years of age were punished brutally, even for the most trivial acts of mischief. They could for instance, be detained in work-houses or in prisons, where they served their sentences alongside their adult counterparts, who often harassed or sexually abused them (Peacock, 2006: 7). The unique factors which motivated youth to come into conflict with the law were therefore still ignored, but also intensified by the consequences associated with this more punitive colonial justice system which disregarded what was in the best interest of the child, and highlighted the retributive and deterrent nature of the punishments it imposed, thereby neglecting the rehabilitative component.

1.3.2. The development of juvenile institutions

Changes occurring in both American and South African society in the 1800s, paralleled changes in the methods of dealing with youth in conflict with the law (Whitehead & Lab, 2013: 29). Cities grew rapidly in terms of both density and diversity, as industrialisation led to a myriad of families flocking to the city in search of employment opportunities. In this regard, Peacock (2006: 7) notes “traditional forms of social control began to disintegrate as rural families migrated to urban areas where they experienced typical problems associated with urbanisation such as unemployment, poverty, population density and cultural conflict inherent to culturally heterogeneous populations”. This shift from rural to urban life had a ‘corrupting’ influence on children as they were now even more exposed to the plethora of socio-criminogenic risk factors within the immediate environment, thus enhancing their likelihood of conflicting with the law.

The primary response to this was to provide impoverished families with training so that they could become productive members of society. Unfortunately, very little could be done in terms of adults as they were regarded as being beyond the training stage and instead, the emphasis fell on training the children of the poor to be productive members of society. The key element being to remove children from any negative influences, which included addressing the insufficient training provided by their parents (Whitehead & Lab, 2013: 29). This phenomenon could be seen as one of the earlier attempts to address the factors which motivated children to transgress.

In Western tradition, the very first attempt to offer specialised training to children occurred in the English Court of Chancery applying the doctrine of *parens patriae*, the monarch or other suitable authority, regarded as the legal protector of citizens who were unable to protect themselves. The Lord Chancellor Court who acted on behalf of the King (*pater patriae*) exercised jurisdiction over children. This however, was limited to neglected or dependent children, and children who violated the law were still dealt with by regular adult courts (Burfeind & Bartusch, 2006: 21; Peacock, 2006: 8). This meant that the unique risk factors contributing to misconduct were still underemphasised to the detriment of vulnerable youth in conflict with the law, consequently obstructing the 'ideal' of treatment and training with the reduction of conflict as an aim.

With regard to the South African context, significant progress was made in 1881, when a parliamentary committee was established in the Cape Colony, tasked with determining the necessity for a separate facility for youth who transgressed the law. The recommendations of this committee were implemented in January 1882 when William Porter, the Attorney-General of the Cape Colony, contributed £20 000 towards the construction of a reformatory for youth in conflict with the law. The *Porter Reform School* or *Porter House Reformatory* was erected, and subsequently led to the Reformatory Institutions Act in 1879 (Peacock, 2006: 8; Skelton & Tshehla, 2008: 30).

Two years later, the juvenile court was instituted and the doctrine of *parens patriae* extended to all youth, including wayward children. Hereafter many developments to assist youth with problematic behaviour took place.

According to Grobler (1941: 45), the most notable of these developments included:

- I. The institution of *The South African Council for Child Welfare* in 1924 which was established to coordinate the activities of existing organisations, leading to the development of an important body in the prevention of youth misconduct;
- II. The introduction of a *Child Guidance Clinic* in 1941, which provided assistance to youth with behavioural problems;
- III. The establishment of 14 residences for orphans and destitute children by the Dutch Reformed Church; and
- IV. The creation of special courts to assist youth in conflict with the law.

Despite these developments, it is important to note that a significant number of youth who came into conflict with the law during this period, were still being subjected to harsh punishment by a system which often neglected the importance of crime reduction and rehabilitation. Signifying that even though child justice was developing, many cases still existed where little attention was given to the socio-criminogenic risk factors which motivated criminality, and which needed to be addressed in order to successfully treat and train individuals in conflict with the law, specifically adolescents who transgressed.

1.3.3. Further developments in child justice

During the early 1990s a group of non-governmental organisations (NGO's) raised national and international awareness concerning youth in conflict with the law, by initiating the first intensive call for a fair and impartial child justice system aimed at providing assistance to youth appearing in court or awaiting trial (Van Eerden, 2013: 18). Another breakthrough occurred in 1992, when the National Institute for Crime Prevention and the Reintegration of Offenders (NICRO) launched a programme directed at diverting children from the formal justice system into rehabilitative and re-integrative programmes. This was followed by an international seminar on *Children in Trouble with the Law* in 1993. This seminar was held by the Community Law Centre at the University of the Western Cape in Cape Town, the goal being to discuss proposals for policy and legislative change (Van Eerden, 2013: 20).

South Africa then solidified its commitment to the plight of children within the criminal justice system by ratifying the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child on 16 June 1995. In 2000, South Africa also ratified the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child. This meant that South Africa was now obligated to institute laws, procedures and institutions exclusively applicable to youth in conflict with the law. These two treaties highlighted the fact that cases involving youth accused of committing transgressions should be handled in a manner sensitive to their vulnerabilities as children, and should include crime reduction and rehabilitation benefits as opposed to the previous retributive form of justice (PAN: Children, 2015; Van Eerden, 2013: 21). In essence, the ratification of these treaties would lead to specific rehabilitation and reintegration efforts designed to target the unique criminogenic risk factors contributing to youth misconduct.

Another important milestone in juvenile justice history was the establishment of the Juvenile Justice Project Committee of the South African Law Reform Commission in 1997, which was approved by parliament late in 2008 and became known as the *Child Justice Act 75 of 2008*. This act however, only took effect on 1 April 2010, having been developed with several regional and international policy directives in mind (Bezuidenhout, 2013: 177). These directives would ideally serve the best interests of youth and children in conflict with the law, promoting successful rehabilitation and societal integration through taking cognisance of the factors (both social and individual) which motivated misconduct.

In addition to this, it would also emphasise the social difficulties and challenges faced by youth who are more vulnerable to both victimisation and offending in comparison to their adult counterparts. Thus stressing the need for research into socio-criminogenic risk factors, particularly in cases involving youth, so as to reach the goal of successful rehabilitation and societal reintegration as emphasised in the 2014/1015 *Annual Report of the Judicial Inspectorate for Correctional Services* (Judicial Inspectorate of Prisons, 2015: 48).

1.4. Legislative framework

The following discussion provides an exposition of the international legal instruments and domestic legislation relevant to the treatment and training of South African youth in conflict with the law.

1.4.1. International legal instruments

The child justice reform process in South Africa has been shaped by a number of international legal instruments and soft laws meant to address concerns relating to youth in conflict with the law. These instruments include:

- I. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of a Child;
- II. The United Nations Guidelines for the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency;
- III. The United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Administration of Juvenile Justice;
- IV. The United Nations Rules for the Protection of Juveniles Deprived of their Liberty; and
- V. The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child.

When South Africa promulgated its first *Constitution* (Act 108 of 1996), these instruments fundamentally led to the establishment of certain rights pertaining to youth in conflict with the law. These rights depicted an ideal child justice system and included the right to: 1) a fair trial, 2) legal representation, 3) to be kept separately from adults, 4) to be kept in conditions that take account of the child's age and 5) to be detained only as a measure of last resort (PAN: Children, 2015; Van Eerden, 2013: 38).

1.4.1.1. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of a Child

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of a Child (CRC) was adopted by the United Nations on 20 November 1989, came into force on 2 September 1990 and was ratified by South Africa on 16 June 1995. This convention incorporates a myriad of children's rights, provides a comprehensive framework within which child justice must be understood, and can be regarded as a primary instrument guiding the development of child justice (Skelton & Tshehla, 2008: 16; Sloth-Nielson & Gallinetti, 2004: 22; Van Eerden, 2013: 42). According to Sloth-Nielson and Gallinetti (2004: 22), the guiding principles of the convention include:

- I. The best interests of the child must broadly be applied to administrative decisions, policy formation and diversion. In this regard, the importance of socio-criminogenic risk factors should be noted, as rehabilitation and societal reintegration is in the best interest of the child. However, these ideals would be impossible to achieve without the ability to identify and treat specific socio-criminogenic risk factors.
- II. Children should not be discriminated against on the basis of age, gender, ethnicity or any other status. Youthfulness and being male (gender) has already been identified as static criminogenic risk factors (see section 1.4.2.1.) which could contribute to misconduct, stressing the importance of understanding various criminogenic risk factors.
- III. Children must be given the opportunity to participate in all decisions. An important guideline to consider, as the child himself/herself would be given the opportunity to highlight specific socio-criminogenic factors which contributed to their behaviour, for instance, in the context of deciding on a suitable diversion option.
- IV. The last guiding principle is broadly concerned with the right to health, social services and protection from violence and harm. Factors such as health conditions

affecting behaviour (see section 1.2.4.5.) and the negative consequences related to the experience of violence or harm (see section 1.2.4.4.) have also been identified as criminogenic factors which could motivate misconduct.

The CRC also highlights the fact that youth in conflict with the law should ideally be dealt with devoid of formal judicial proceedings, bearing the best interests of the child in mind, so as to highlight the importance of treatment, training and societal reintegration. Furthermore, it recommends that state parties recognise the rights of every child alleged as, accused of, or accepted of having infringed penal law, to be treated in a way that is consistent with the promotion of the child's sense of dignity and self-worth. This would strengthen the child's respect for the human rights and fundamental freedom of others, and promote reintegration into society (Skelton & Tshehla, 2008: 17; Van Eerden, 2013: 43). This convention thus seeks to neutralise exposure to criminogenic risk factors, particularly factors related to inappropriate punishment, detention and the maladministration of justice.

1.4.1.2. The United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Administration of Juvenile Justice

The United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Administration of Juvenile Justice (The Beijing Rules) was developed in 1985, and identifies the elements necessary for the administration of an effective juvenile justice system. This involves various strategies for child justice systems and non-custodial interventions, which include families, volunteers and the community. These strategies are set up to promote reintegration and the reduction of recidivism, through the inclusion of social agents such as the family or community, thereby engaging with certain socio-criminogenic risk factors present within the context of the family (such as abuse, neglect or weak parental attachment) and the community (such as social disorganisation or a lack of economic opportunities).

The Beijing Rules also emphasise the fair and humane treatment of youth in conflict with the law, maintaining that incarceration should always be considered as a last resort, for the shortest period of time possible, and should be imposed only after careful consideration of all other alternatives. In addition to this, 1) any reaction to youth in conflict with the law must at all times be in proportion to the circumstances of both the youth and the transgression (the proportionality principle); 2) wherever

appropriate, consideration must always be given to deal with youthful transgressors without resorting to a formal trial (diversion); and 3) there should be the least possible restriction on the liberty of youth in conflict with the law (Gallinetti, 2009: 9; Skelton & Tshehla, 2008: 21; Van Eerden, 2013: 38).

In terms of the *proportionality principle*, the mitigating factors, amongst others, should be taken into account. Ideally, this should include acknowledging the unique socio-criminogenic risk factors which contributed to the law-violating behaviour of the youth involved, as these factors could affect liability/blameworthiness (i.e. having suffered abuse from an early age). In terms of promoting *diversion*, it is equally important to take cognisance of the unique criminogenic risk factors present, as any effective diversion programme should target the underlying factors which contributed to the harmful behaviour of the youth. Gaining a better understanding of the presence and influence of socio-criminogenic risk factors would therefore contribute to more efficient application of the Beijing Rules, thereby demonstrating the importance of contemporary risk-factor research.

1.4.1.3. The United Nations Guidelines for the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency

The United Nations Guidelines for the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency (The Riyadh Guidelines) provides guidance to States on strategies to prevent children from coming into conflict with the law. These guidelines constitute a set of 65 universal principles aimed reducing misconduct at the pre-conflict stage, and proposes a social policy which is specifically centred on the identification of social risk situations within the domains of the family, school and community (Bezuidenhout, 2013: 161; Skelton & Tshehla, 2008: 18; Van Eerden, 2013: 41). Within this context, the value of research aimed at exploring the presence and influence of socio-criminogenic risk factors on behaviour, cannot be ignored.

Research of this nature would thus make a valuable contribution to primary crime reduction efforts in terms of the goals envisaged by the Riyadh Guidelines, but also to tertiary reduction efforts as envisioned by the Department of Correctional Services (Judicial Inspectorate of Prisons, 2015: 48), and various other non-governmental organisations offering diversion/rehabilitative programmes. More importantly, it would

be in the interests of the vulnerable and marginalised youth exposed to these socio-criminogenic risk factors.

Van Eerden (2013: 41) however, notes that these guidelines have received very little attention in South Africa, as “the only real recognition afforded to it in South Africa was the National Crime Prevention Strategy (NCPS), which was published in 1996. This was hailed as an excellent example of social crime prevention policy, and it is unfortunate that it was overtaken by a crime control approach, and is rarely referred to by Government”. This is disconcerting as the core of these guidelines are focused on providing a variety of services based in the family and community, which would address youth misconduct before it occurs. In so doing, common socio-criminogenic risk factors within the context of the family and the community could be identified and treated by exposing vulnerable, or at risk youth to applicable preventative factors (see section 1.2.4.3.) so as to reduce their probability of coming into conflict with the law.

1.4.1.4. The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child

The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child came into force on 29 November 1999 and was endorsed by South Africa on 7 January 2000. At a regional level, this Charter supplements the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, and can be regarded as a collective approach which balances the rights of a child with respect for families and communities (Skelton & Tshehla, 2008: 25; Van Eerden, 2013: 46). With regards to child justice, Sloth-Nielsen and Gallinetti (2004: 29) highlight Article 17(1) of the Charter, which states that “every child accused or found guilty of having infringed penal law shall have the right to special treatment in a manner consistent with the child’s sense of dignity and worth and which reinforces the child’s respect for human rights and the fundamental freedoms of others”.

Article 17(3) of the Charter characterises this *special treatment* as being the child’s “reformation, reintegration into his/her family and social rehabilitation” (Sloth-Nielsen & Gallinetti, 2004: 29). An essential aspect relating to the reformation, reintegration and social rehabilitation of youth in conflict with the law, as proposed by the Charter, is the identification and treatment of socio-criminogenic risk factors motivating misconduct. Therefore, again highlighting the need for, and importance of research pertaining to social risk factors, specifically within the African and South African contexts.

In conclusion, the international instruments discussed above provide guidelines pertaining to an ideal child justice system. Amongst others, this ideal system is centred on preventing youth from coming into conflict with the law, as well as on interventions for when youth misconduct does occur. In both cases, the value of research pertaining to socio-criminogenic risk factors specifically, should not be ignored as it would be impossible to prevent youth misconduct at the pre-conflict stage without addressing risks within the domain of the family, community, school and peer group. Effective intervention in cases where youth have already transgressed, would be just as impractical without thorough knowledge and understanding of the social risk factors which youth are exposed to. This serves as further motivation for research of this nature to be conducted.

1.4.2. Domestic legislation

Several developments with regards to the domestication of the international and regional instruments discussed in the preceding section, have led South Africa to adopt the Child Justice Act 75 of 2008 (CJA). This Act came into operation on 1 April 2010 and would ideally serve the best interests of youth in conflict with the law, by promoting successful rehabilitation and societal reintegration through taking cognisance of the individual and socio-criminogenic risk factors which promote youth misconduct (PAN: Children, 2015). The following section provides an exposition of the Child Justice Act 75 of 2008.

1.4.2.1. The Child Justice Act 75 of 2008

The Child Justice Act (Act 75 of 2008) presents a rights-based approach to youth in conflict with the law, which acknowledges the child's sense of dignity and self-worth; offers youth the opportunity to take responsibility for their behaviour; allows them to reconcile with victims; and to participate in programmes aimed at developing pro-social behavioural patterns (Gallinetti, 2009: 12; Van Eerden, 2013: 31).

a) Scope and application

The Child Justice Act (Act 75 of 2008) applies to any person under the age of 18 years who is alleged to have committed a transgression, including children under the age of 10 years at the time of the commission of the offence and children between ages of 10 and 18 years when handed a notice to appear in court, served with a summons or

arrested. It is important to note that the CJA also, in accordance with directives issued by the *National Director of Public Prosecutions*, allows for persons between the ages of 18 and 21 years to be assessed and diverted (Child Justice Act 75 of 2008; Gallinetti, 2009: 15). Youth in this age group are particularly marginalised and vulnerable to both victimisation and coming into conflict with the law (see section 1.1.) and it is thus crucial to acknowledge that they could benefit from certain procedures contained in the CJA.

It can also be argued that the CJA should apply to persons between the ages of 21 and 25 years, as this would correspond with the United Nations definition of *youth* (see section 1.2.1.), but more importantly because young persons in this age category still form part of a 'high-risk' age cohort for victimisation and transgressing. Individuals in this age category are therefore, also vulnerable to the influence of various socio-criminogenic risk factors ranging from unemployment to social disorganisation, and their inclusion in the scope and application of the CJA would benefit a particularly marginalised group in South Africa.

b) Diversion

The Child Justice Act (Act 75 of 2008) makes diversion a central feature of the child justice process. Diversion involves channelling the child away from the formal justice system and placing them into rehabilitative and reintegrative programmes. Section 51 of the CJA, sets out the objectives of diversion as follows (Gallinetti, 2009: 43):

- To deal with the child outside the criminal justice system in appropriate cases;
- To encourage accountability for the harm caused by the misconduct;
- To meet the unique needs of the child;
- To promote reintegration into the family and community;
- To afford victims the opportunity to express their views;
- To encourage compensation for the harm caused to the victim;
- To promote reconciliation between the child, the victim and the community;
- To prevent the adverse consequences flowing from the criminal justice system;
- To reduce the potential for reoffending;
- To prevent the child from acquiring a criminal record; and
- To promote the dignity and well-being of the child.

From the objectives of diversion as set out in the CJA, the value of research contributing to the understanding and identification of socio-criminogenic risk factors, is clear. In terms of both promoting reintegration and reducing the potential for reoffending, a thorough assessment of the risk factors which contributed to the misconduct, and the successive treatment thereof, is essential. Research of this nature, focussing specifically on identifying the presence and influence of socio-criminogenic risk factors, particularly based on the unique experiences of the youth themselves, could thus prove invaluable in this regard.

c) Sentencing

The Child Justice Act (Act 75 of 2008) provides for both custodial and non-custodial sentencing options. These options include community-based sentences, restorative justice sentences, correctional supervision, suspended sentences with or without conditions, symbolic restitution or the payment of compensation to the victim and placement in a youth care centre or correctional centre (Child Justice Act 75 of 2008; Gallinetti, 2009: 53). Similar to the objectives of diversion, the objectives of sentencing as set out in the CJA, include reintegrating the child back into the family and community, and providing treatment and training in order to reduce the potential for reoffending.

With regards to the objectives of sentencing, it once again becomes important to identify and treat the factors motivating youth to come into conflict with the law. With specific reference to the reduction of potential reoffending, any sentence imposed should ideally include mechanisms which influence the way in which youth respond to various risk factors within their community, school, family or peer group, so as to alter the effect exposure to these factors would have on their behaviour in future. This research is therefore also valuable with regard to its potential contribution towards achieving the objectives of sentencing for youth in conflict with the law, as set out in Section 69(1) of the CJA (Child Justice Act 75 of 2008; Gallinetti, 2009: 53).

According to Van Eerden (2013: 32) the Child Justice Act embodies a fundamental break within the traditional criminal justice system as “the traditional pillars of punishment, retribution and deterrence are replaced with continued emphasis on the need to gain an understanding of the child caught up in behaviour transgressing the law, by assessing his or her personality, determining whether the child is in need of

care and correcting errant actions as far as possible by diversion, community-based programmes, the application of restorative justice processes and the reintegration of the child into the community". More research pertaining to socio-criminogenic risk factors is thus also pivotal in this regard.

1.4.2.2. The White Paper on Corrections

The White Paper on Corrections in South Africa (2005: 78) emphasises the need for policies aimed at service delivery and correction of youthful transgressors between the ages of 18 and 25 years. This particular category of the South African incarcerated populace has been growing rapidly since the first decade of democratic South Africa, and is comprised of those individuals whom even after serving lengthy sentences, still have the ability to change and become productive members of society. This implies that the provision of rehabilitative/corrective service delivery focussed on human development, and education and training, should be seen as a central element for the successful reintegration of youth in conflict with the law, and for the prevention of recidivism. Correctional centres detaining young people should therefore be designed to accommodate the building and strengthening of social aspects such as family ties, as well as to provide adolescents with services and programmes which will assist them in their transition to full adulthood (White Paper on Corrections in South Africa, 2005: 79).

It should be noted that youthfulness is always regarded as a mitigating factor with regards to the imposition of sentence, and young persons should be incarcerated only after careful consideration. Once incarcerated, the ideal is to address the negative influence of various socio-criminogenic risk factors such as providing access to social work services, psychological services, religious care, recreational programmes and sustained contact with family members, in order to aid the effective rehabilitation and reintegration of youth in conflict with the law.

The period of incarceration should therefore be used to ensure (as far as possible) successful reintegration upon release by offering education, vocational training and other forms of assistance including those of a remedial, moral, spiritual, social, health and sports-based nature. By its very nature, this implies that individual assessments should be done in order to identify the unique socio-criminogenic risk factors motivating behaviour, so as to inform correctional administrators which rehabilitation

programmes to prescribe. In so doing, social factors relating to education, remedial, moral and spiritual issues pertaining to youth in conflict with the law, could be identified and addressed.

The legal instruments discussed in this section thus emphasises the need for formal criminal justice system responses in order to address the socio-criminogenic risk factors leading to law-violating behaviour, as this is the only way in which effective rehabilitation and social reintegration can be promoted.

1.5. Motivation for and purpose of the research

The following section will outline specific problems that relate to the development of empirical knowledge surrounding socio-criminogenic risk factors, thus developing a rationale grounded in the available literature.

1.5.1. Societal relevance

The incidence of crime continues to show an increase in contemporary South Africa (Khan & Singh, 2014: 105; Peacock, 2006: 19). Crime statistics released by the South African Police Service for 2015 depicts a negative outlook for crime in the country as 16 out of the 27 crime categories saw a rise in reported criminal activity from 2014 to 2015. A total of 2, 206 000 crimes were committed over this period, having increased marginally (0.09%) from the 2, 204 000 reported crimes in 2014 (Crime Statistics for South Africa, 2015). According to the *South African Police Service Annual Crime Report*, a total of 2 126 552 serious crimes were recorded during the 2015/2016 financial year. Although it is unclear which percentage of these transgressions involved adolescents, an analysis conducted in KwaZulu-Natal revealed that 78% of all arrested suspects in the province were youth aged 29 years and younger (SAPS Annual Crime Report, 2016).

Statistics obtained from the *2014/2015 Annual Report of the Judicial Inspectorate for Correctional Services* (JICS), also indicated that roughly 24 656 sentenced individuals fall within the said youth category (Judicial Inspectorate of Prisons, 2015: 48). For the period 2015/2016, the population has remained relatively similar, with a slight increase amongst both those sentenced and on remand (Judicial Inspectorate of Prisons, 2016: 44).

Due to the alarming nature of statistics such as these, it is imperative to gain an understanding of the socio-criminogenic risk factors that motivate and contribute to the commission of law violations, in order to improve the efficacy of rehabilitative and therapeutic programmes offered to youth. Shader (2001: 3) supports this by stating that “violence prevention and intervention efforts hinge on identifying risk and protective factors and determining when in the course of development they emerge”. The study of socio-criminogenic risk factors is therefore critical to the improvement and development of crime reduction programmes.

Furthermore, it could serve to inform policies on rehabilitation and social reintegration of youth in conflict with the law, which could subsequently contribute to the development of new programmes and the modification of existing programmes, targeting specific crime causative factors. Programmes run at correctional centres and non-governmental organisations such as NICRO, could therefore cater specifically to the unique needs of the youth in its care, seeking to render rehabilitation and reintegration more effective, in the quest of a much needed conceptual understanding of socio-criminogenic risk factors.

1.5.2. Victimological relevance

At risk youth and youth in conflict with the law are often viewed in the context of the ‘transgressor’, without realising that a considerable number of youth come into conflict with the law as a result of being prior victims of crime or simply being victims of their circumstances. According to Van Der Hoven and Maree (Davis & Snyman, 2007: 58) and Peacock (2013: 7), younger individuals often have higher rates of victimisation than older individuals. This may be a result of their lack of life experience, being more careless in trying to avoid victimisation or being more receptive to promises of ‘fabulous bargains’ or ‘spectacular opportunities’ (Davis & Snyman, 2007: 58; Peacock, 2013: 7). It may also be as a result of specific social factors related to their age, gender and social class, or conditions related to their family, school, community or peer group associations.

Therefore, the value of identifying the presence and influence of socio-criminogenic risk factors is twofold. On one hand it could serve to improve the efficacy and success of rehabilitation programmes offered to youth in conflict with the law, thereby contributing to more effective societal reintegration. On the other, it could serve to

identify instances where youth in the conflict with the law have suffered some degree of victimisation, which could have contributed to their transgression, or for which they may need treatment in order to facilitate their rehabilitation into productive members of society. In this instance, risk factors presenting within the family context can be used as an illustration.

A young person who is a victim of violence within the family has a higher risk of transgressing (as explained by the Social Learning perspective), but is also a crime victim in need of empowerment and support. More often than not such an individual would only be seen as a 'transgressor' in need of punishment, rather than also being seen as a victim in need of support. Even if the physical abuse is addressed, and as a result the risk of transgressing is lowered, the individual may still need people to acknowledge that he/she has been victimised in order for them to gain closure and progress with their lives.

It is therefore also important to highlight instances where youth in conflict with the law have been victims due to their exposure to social risk factors, such as abuse within the family, school, community, or peer group context. Subsequently, the socio-criminogenic risk factors contributing to law-violating behaviour need to be identified, thereby aiding rehabilitation and societal integration. Instances where these youth themselves were victimised also need to be identified, in order to effectively address both the victimisation and the potential underlying risk factors.

1.5.3. Criminal Justice System relevance

As indicated (see section 1.4.), several international and domestic legal instruments including the United Nations Convention on the Rights of a Child, the United Nations Guidelines for the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency, the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Administration of Juvenile Justice, the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, the Children's Act 38 of 2005 and the Child Justice Act 75 of 2008, provide a clear picture of what an ideal juvenile justice system should include. This involves promoting the well-being of the child, diverting the child away from the formal justice system in all applicable instances, the inclusion of the family and community in processes related to youth in conflict with the law, and allowing the child to participate in decision-making.

These instruments are also centred on leading principles relating to juvenile justice, including the prevention of youth misconduct, the availability of effective interventions and programmes in cases where youth come into conflict with the law, awareness-raising and training. The goal being to prevent youth misconduct at the pre-conflict stage, and the successful rehabilitation and societal reintegration of youth who come into conflict with the law (Child Justice Act 75 of 2008; Gallinetti, 2009: 12; PAN: Children, 2015; Skelton & Tshehla, 2008: 25; Sloth-Nielsen & Gallinetti, 2004: 29; Van Eerden, 2013: 32).

Although depriving children of their liberty should be a measure of last resort and should be restricted to the shortest possible period of time (Skelton & Tshehla, 2008: 26), there are many instances where the transgressions are of such a nature that incarceration is the only applicable option (see section 1.1.). In this regard, the *2014/2015 Annual Report of the Judicial Inspectorate for Correctional Services (JICS)* highlights the view that the number of incarcerated young people is “unacceptably high” and that South Africa can ill-afford this situation.

This means that the criminal and social justice sectors must make a concerted effort to ensure that young persons’ firstly do not enter the justice system, and that if they do, their trial and incarceration are dealt with as a priority. If not, the social and psychological damage may be irreversible, as youths who have experienced incarceration are even more vulnerable and disadvantaged upon their release. Moreover, the report explicitly states that “If these young people are not adequately *rehabilitated* and *skilled* during incarceration their re-joining society will jeopardise the mission of government to have safer and secure communities” (Judicial Inspectorate of Prisons, 2015: 48).

In order to achieve this vision of effective rehabilitation and societal reintegration as set out by the various legal instruments pertaining to youth in conflict with the law (see section 1.4.), and by the *Annual Report of the Judicial Inspectorate for Correctional Services* (Judicial Inspectorate of Prisons, 2015: 48), the factors which motivate and contribute to youth conflicting with the law cannot be ignored. These socio-criminogenic risk factors should ideally be identified as soon as possible, so as to inform the relevant role players on what the most effective treatment programmes would be in each specific case. If this process is ignored, the criminal justice system

runs the risk of providing inappropriate programmes which do not address the unique factors motivating law-violating behaviour, thereby placing both the rehabilitation and reintegration of adolescents in jeopardy.

More importantly, this would mean that adolescents would still be at risk of coming into conflict with the law upon completion of their programmes, as the system would have failed to equip them with the skills needed to better deal with the social factors contributing to misconduct. Therefore the importance of research aimed at exploring socio-criminogenic risk factors cannot be underemphasised, as this would have a negative impact on primary conflict reduction, youth recidivism rates and prospects for the successful societal reintegration of youth in conflict with the law.

1.5.4. Dearth of research

Although some research on the risk factors influencing behaviour has been conducted, much of it pertains to the international context and a limited number of studies pertaining to the domestic situation is available. Hawkins, et. al. (2000: 2) conducted one such study focusing on a statistical analysis of the predictors for youth violence. Their research was aimed at determining the strength of the association between particular risk factors and the violence incurred as a result thereof. Some of the predictors for violence highlighted by Hawkins, et. al. (2000: 2) include aggressiveness, parental criminality, academic failure, delinquent peer association and a lack of socio-economic opportunities.

Recommendations based on the findings of the aforementioned study included the need for further research on the influence of criminogenic risk factors to be conducted, with specific reference to studies which contrast violent and non-violent transgressions, as well as research which would contribute to the conceptual understanding of protective factors which mitigate the effects of risk exposure (Hawkins, et. al., 2000: 7). Based on the recommendations made by Hawkins, et. al. (2000: 7), the current study could contribute to the existing body of knowledge by providing a greater understanding of the socio-criminogenic risk factors which may contribute to law-violating behaviour, rather than focusing specifically on risk factors related to violence.

Other studies were aimed at determining the link between specific socio-criminogenic risk factors, namely social disorganisation and relative deprivation, and law-violating behaviour (Demombynes & Özler, 2005; Fergusson, Swain-Campbell & Horwood, 2004; Kawachi, Kennedy & Wilkinson, 1999). The results of these studies show a link between social disorganisation and relative deprivation, and an increased risk for coming into conflict with the law. However, the scope of these studies is limited as they only explore risk factors related to social disorganisation and relative deprivation respectively. Thereby overlooking the potential influence of other socio-criminogenic risk factors within the domain of the family, school and peer group as factors which could also substantially contribute to behaviour, and increase the potential for youth to come into conflict with the law. The current study could therefore make a valuable contribution to the conceptual understanding of socio-criminogenic risk factors explored across different domains, namely the family, community, school and peer group.

A study conducted by Hoffman (2006: 867) attempted to establish whether the different types of communities within which families reside, affect the relationship between family structure and behavioural misconduct. Hoffman (2006: 867) found that youth who reside in communities with a high proportion of impoverished residents, female-headed households, or unemployed males, reported more behavioural problems irrespective of family structure. Youth living in households with a recently divorced mother, a step-parent, or a single parent, also reported more behavioural problems regardless of the community context. However, this study was limited by the exclusion of various other risk factors, such as the availability of extended family members or close friends that could act as a substitute for family. It is possible that the exclusion of these factors may provide a limited understanding of the relationship between family systems and structures, and behavioural problems. The current study would thus also supplement the study conducted by Hoffman (2006) as it explores socio-criminogenic risk factors within the family and community, but also includes risk factors within the domain of the school and peer group.

With regard to South African research on the influence of socio-criminogenic risk factors on behaviour, Van der Merwe and Dawes (2007) presented a review of theoretical and empirical research on risk factors. However, due to limited local

research, their review draws largely on international studies (Van der Merwe & Dawes, 2007: 95).

Another study conducted by Harris and Bezuidenhout (2010) was aimed at investigating the risk factors contributing to youth sex offending in South Africa. A limitation of this study being, the focus on criminogenic risk factors for one specific transgression exclusively. Within the domestic context, the current research could prove valuable as it would facilitate a more comprehensive understanding of socio-criminogenic risk factors pertaining to South African youth in particular.

A different study, conducted by Khan and Singh (2014) sought to identify the psychosocio-criminogenic risk factors pertaining to South African youth in detention in Durban. This study utilized a mixed-method approach (semi-structured interviews and questionnaires) that was conducted with 77 participants, and established that factors such as poverty, unemployment, academic failure and poor familial relations were common features contributing to the behaviour of youth in the sample.

A similar study was conducted by Leoschut and Bonora, in Gauteng and the Western Cape respectively (Burton, 2007). Focus groups were used to gather the data and amongst others, factors such as exposure to crime and violence, poverty, peer pressure, substance abuse and various family variables were identified as common criminogenic risk factors.

Although both the aforementioned studies are empirically sound, both studies were conducted in larger metropolitan areas, making it difficult to ascertain whether or not similar factors will be identified in smaller cities. Limited local research remains, with most studies focusing only on risk factors relating to specific transgressions, or to studies which were conducted on only one particular type of risk factor. Large numbers of youth continue to transgress and are frequently incarcerated as a result thereof, an alarming trend serving as an important rationale for this study. Socio-criminogenic risk factors thus need to be identified in order to make rehabilitation and societal integration more effective, but also to proactively address these factors in order to promote primary crime prevention.

1.6. Aims of the study

In considering the aforementioned challenges related to prior international and domestic risk factor research, it should become apparent that there is a need for research pertaining to identifying the presence, and understanding the influence of the diverse range of socio-criminogenic risk factors on youth misconduct, particularly in the South African context.

In order to adequately address these challenges and draw informed conclusions, the following aims have been formulated:

- I. To explore the socio-criminogenic risk factors that may contribute to the law-violating behaviour of a group of youth;
- II. To identify prominent recurrent clusters of socio-criminogenic risk factors; and
- III. To achieve a greater understanding of the research participants experience of socio-criminogenic risk factors.

1.7. Conclusion

South African youth are exposed to a wide range of socio-criminogenic risk factors which may predispose them to be at risk of engaging in socially maladaptive behaviour, or of coming into conflict with the law. A significant number of youth have already been negatively affected by challenges related to socio-economic disadvantage, limited opportunities for conventional success, family conflict and interpersonal violence, antisocial peer affiliation and gang membership, while an equally high percentage of youth have been incarcerated for serious transgressions. These youth face numerous complications in terms of both their transition into adulthood, as well as on their journey to become responsible social actors. This study is therefore aimed at exploring the socio-criminogenic risk factors which contribute to youth coming into conflict with the law, in order to gain a greater understanding of the personal experiences and views of a group of sentenced youth, with the ultimate aim of conflict reduction.

CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

The exploration of the crime phenomenon, with specific reference to youth in conflict with the law, has engendered an opulent body of theory which offers a plethora of plausible explanations related to youth misconduct (Elliott, Ageton & Canter, 1979: 3). This chapter aims to provide a comprehensive framework of the theoretical background that will be applied in the research, by postulating four dominant pathways related to socio-criminogenic risk factors within the domains of the family, school, community and peer group, which could lead youth to engage in law-violating behaviour. These pathways will be elucidated through the explanation and synthesis of the Strain, Subculture, Social Control and Social Learning perspectives on youth misconduct, in an attempt to highlight the motives for youth to come into conflict with the law based on their exposure to various socio-criminogenic risk factors within the family, school, community and peer group contexts.

2.1. Introduction

Despite the dearth of research concerning the socio-criminogenic risk factors which increase the vulnerability of youth to come into conflict with the law (see section 1.5.4.), the conditions which place youth at risk as either victims or as transgressors are wide-ranging and commonly include risk factors related to the family, community, school and peer group contexts (Bezuidenhout, 2013: 70; Khan & Singh, 2014: 108; Shader, 2001: 4). Socio-criminogenic risk factors within these four domains function interdependently, and variables presenting in one domain (i.e. the family context) would have a high probability of affecting variables in another domain (i.e. the school context), subsequently increasing an individual's risk of coming into conflict with the law (see section 1.2.4.4.). The succeeding discussion therefore aims to provide a theoretical link between socio-criminogenic risk factors and youth misconduct, with reference to the factors identified in each of the aforementioned domains.

2.1.1. The family context

Conditions within the family are commonly accepted as one of the key factors influencing behavioural misconduct, and many authors are of the opinion that the initial socialisation which occurs within the family unit is one of the strongest predictors for youth to come into conflict with the law (Arthur, 2007: 7; Bartollas & Schmallegger, 2013:

103; Bezuidenhout, 2013: 75,138; Bezuidenhout & Joubert, 2008: 62; Burton, 2007: 19; Gaik, Abdullah, Elias & Uli, 2010: 384; Smith, 2010: 247). Factors such as weak parenting skills, large family size, illicit substance abuse, discord within the home, divorce, family conflict and interpersonal violence, socio-economic challenges and being raised by antisocial parents, all have the potential to negatively affect the socialisation process, thereby increasing the risk for youth to come into conflict with the law (Hawkins, et. al., 2000: 3; McCord, Widom & Crowell, 2001: 75; Shader, 2001: 6). Whether from a psychological focus (such as Farrington), a control perspective (such as Weis), a conflict perspective (such Colvin and Pauly) or a general theoretical orientation (such as Gottfredson and Hirschi), family life is therefore of crucial importance (Bezuidenhout, 2013: 138).

The degeneration of families, particularly in developing countries like South Africa, thus cannot be overlooked as challenges including child-headed households, parental and sibling criminality, single-parent households and family conflict are rife; providing youth with an inadequate frame of reference for socially acceptable and moral behaviour (Bezuidenhout, 2013: 138; Hawkins, et. al., 2000: 3). Arguably, a lack of socialisation due to the presence of socio-criminogenic risk factors within the family context may then affect how adolescents respond when exposed to risk factors within the school, community and peer group domains.

2.1.2. The school context

Whilst the family is regarded as a primary socialisation agent, the school is commonly viewed as one of the most important secondary socialisation agents, and is tasked with reinforcing socially acceptable behaviour initially taught within the family unit. If an individual is not 'adequately' socialised within their respective families, important role players in the school should be in a position to teach morally and socially acceptable behaviour. However, schooling systems are not always able to do this and in numerous instances become 'a major concern' and a 'vital risk factor' with reference to youth coming into conflict with the law (Bezuidenhout, 2013: 138).

Conditions such as poor academic achievement, truancy, dropping out of school, low levels of bonding with teachers and pro-social peers, disorganisation within the school, violence, a lack of discipline, and the discrepancies between public and private schools, all increase the risk for young persons to come into conflict with the law (De

Souza da Silveira, et. al., 2012: 353; Hawkins, et. al., 2000: 5; McCord, et. al., 2001: 83; O'Mahony, 2009: 101; Shader, 2001: 4). More so when combined with one or more socio-criminogenic risk factors occurring within the domain of the family, peer group or community contexts (Bezuidenhout, 2013: 70; Bezuidenhout & Joubert, 2008: 57; Loeber, et. al., 2008: 147).

2.1.3. The community context

Although the family and the school respectively, are seen as important primary and secondary socialisation agents, the community in which a child is reared may also to a large extent have an influence on their behaviour. McCord, Widom and Crowell (2001: 89) affirm this by noting that the risk for engaging in law-violating behaviour during adolescence is increased when youth are reared in an adverse environment; and that there is a clear link between specific neighbourhoods and youth misconduct.

Hoffman (2006: 869) further substantiates this by adding that youth who reside in communities characterised by poverty, unemployment, female-headed households, ethnic heterogeneity, a lack of positive male role models, gang activity and criminal involvement, are more inclined to display behavioural misconduct as these types of communities are thought to be socially disorganised or anomic. The reason being that these types of communities decrease the effectiveness of 'socialisation and supervision' of the youth residing there, as communities such as these usually tend to have residents who are disconnected from one another, provides fewer positive role models from which to learn socially acceptable behaviour, propagates less trust among citizens and offers less opportunities for conventional success (Hoffman, 2006: 869).

2.1.4. The peer group context

Apart from socio-criminogenic risk factors within the context of the family, school and community, the peer group can be a unique and dominant factor promoting behavioural misconduct. According to McCord, et. al. (2001: 80) "factors such as peer delinquent behaviour, peer approval of delinquent behaviour, attachment or allegiance to peers, time spent with peers, and peer pressure for deviance, have all been associated with adolescent antisocial behaviour". This statement is also supported by several other researchers whom have found a consistent relationship between associating with deviant peers and subsequently coming into conflict with the law

(Bartol & Bartol, 2017: 56; Harris, 2009: 54; Shader, 2001: 6; Siegel, 2002: 185). Deviant peer group associations, therefore, provide an optimal learning environment for antisocial behaviour, particularly for youth with poor parental attachment or those experiencing conflict or strain within the family unit (McCord, et. al., 2001: 80; Shader, 2001: 6). It should, however, again be noted that no single socio-criminogenic risk factor is significant enough to produce law-violating behaviour (see section 1.2.4.4.). Thus one can deduce that a variety of risk factors from the four domains (as summarised in section 1.2.4.4.) work in accordance to increase the risk of youth conflicting with the law. The following section is therefore aimed at establishing a link between these socio-criminogenic risk factors and youth misconduct from a theoretical perspective centered on Strain, Subculture, Social Control and Social Learning theory.

2.2. Robert Merton's Anomie Theory (1938)

The term '*anomie*' is closely associated with two theorists, namely Emile Durkheim (1893) and Robert Merton (1938), and was derived from the Greek phrase '*a nomos*', which means "without norms" (Williams & McShane, 2014: 80). In his 1893 book *The Division of Labor in Society*, Durkheim used the term to describe a state of "deregulation or normlessness" occurring in society (especially during periods of rapid change or social crisis). Subsequently resulting in a breakdown of the procedural rules or social norms governing behaviour, and implying that people no longer know what is expected of them or what to expect from others (Burfeind & Bartusch, 2006: 487; DeKeseredy, Ellis & Alvi, 2005: 37; Schmallegger, 2009: 268; Williams & McShane, 2014: 80).

Without clear rules to guide them, people have difficulty adjusting to changing life conditions such as managing strain, adjusting to socio-economic changes, or adapting when confronted by a lack of resources to gain status and success. As a result, societal members may become dissatisfied, frustrated or deviant. An anomic society is therefore unable to regulate human aspirations and demands, thereby destabilising society's control function. Under these circumstances, it can become strenuous to obey the law, and deviant or criminal actions may ensue (Burfeind & Bartusch, 2006: 487; Schmallegger, 2009: 268; Williams & McShane, 2014: 81).

Years later, Durkheim's concept of anomie was applied to the field of Criminology by Robert Merton, in his attempt to explain deviance in the United States, through the use of his theory on anomie which is regarded as the first major *strain theory* of crime (Burfeind & Bartusch, 2006: 487; Williams & McShane, 2014: 82). Contrary to Durkheim, Merton (1938: 672) believed that social structure and cultural disparities, as opposed to social conditions, resulted in a state of anomie or normlessness. According to Merton (1938: 672), "the inability of the social system to exercise control in the form of social norms", was a crucial component for the occurrence of anomie within communities (DeKeseredy, et. al., 2005: 37; Williams & McShane, 2014: 82).

By dividing social norms into *societal goals* and *acceptable means* with which to achieve those goals, he redefined anomie as a condition which occurred when the social structure caused a rift between those goals and means, for instance with class distinctions. Merton (1938: 672) then referred to deviance as a "product of anomie" or as a "symptom of a social structure within which culturally defined aspirations (goals) and socially structured means (to achieve goals) are separated from each other" (White & Perrone, 2015: 74; Williams & McShane, 2014: 82).

2.2.1. Historical background on the theory

The term 'anomie' was first used by the French Sociologist, Émile Durkheim in the nineteenth century. Durkheim (in Williams, 2012: 341) noted "how societies begin in simple forms of interaction and are held together by solidarity and likeness". In these 'generally homogenous' societies, which Durkheim referred to as 'mechanical societies', members have similar aims and roles. However, when societies grow and become more technologically and economically advanced, the interrelationships between societal members become more complicated and heterogeneous. As a result of these 'natural and unavoidable' changes in society, the aims and roles of each societal member begins to diverge, thereby facilitating the transition to a more 'organic society'. Irrespective whether a society is regarded as mechanical or organic, the law system plays a pivotal role, either to enforce uniformity (as with mechanical societies) or to ensure that diverse segments of society co-exist without conflict (as with organic societies) (White & Perrone, 2015: 76; Williams, 2013: 341).

Durkheim (in Williams, 2013: 341) also viewed crime as a normal and necessary phenomenon in any society, as it contributes to the preservation, interpretation and modification of social rules and control mechanisms which aid in uniting communal members. Subsequently, all societies would thus create rules and provide sanctions in cases where rules are contravened. Healthy crime levels would thus be more likely in mechanical societies as they are more naturally organised, in comparison to organic societies which would more aptly be characterised by unhealthy crime levels due to the challenges associated with regulating the interactions of various parts of that society. It should be noted however, that before anomie can exist in a society, some form of financial or industrial catastrophe must first exist. This would include events such as the Industrial Revolution or The Great Depression of the 1930s. Similarly, anomie may also exist in the presence of unwarranted and unrealistic prosperity, or as a result of excessively rapid industrial growth (White & Perrone, 2015: 76; Williams, 2013: 342).

In 1938, Robert Merton formulated his theory on *Anomie* based on the work of Durkheim, through observing the effects of the breakdown and deregulation of social traditions on both individuals and social institutions such as the family and school. As a student and research assistant at Harvard University, Merton was introduced to Durkheim's concept of anomie by Pitirim Sorokin, whose 1928 book *Contemporary Sociological Theories* included Durkheim's work on anomie. Merton (1938: 674) also worked with Talcott Parsons at Harvard, assisting in his seminal work *The Structure of Social Action*, which attempted to explain social events by highlighting the way in which society is structured. Parsons saw society as an 'equilibrium of forces' which served to create order. Anomie, according to Parsons, then existed when this equilibrium was disturbed due to various components of the social structure becoming unbalanced, subsequently creating chaos or 'anomie' in society (Lilly, Cullen & Ball, 2007: 54; Merton, 1938: 674; White & Perrone, 2015: 76; Williams & McShane, 2014: 83).

According to Williams and McShane (2014: 83) two forms of psychological/biological positivism in the 1930s, also influenced Merton's work on anomie. This included Sigmund Freud's approach to psychotherapy, which highlighted internal conflicts as a contributor to behavioural misconduct and Earnest Hooton's work, in which he theorised on the biological inferiority of individuals in conflict with the law. Merton

reacted strongly to these two approaches, and through focusing on the effects of social structure, he formulated his theory on anomie in 1938 in an attempt to explain how patterns of criminal preferences and behaviours arose as a result of an individual's position within the social structure as opposed to an underlying biological or psychological predisposition (DeKeseredy, et. al., 2005: 37; Lilly, et. al., 2007: 56; Merton, 1938: 674; Williams & McShane, 2014: 83).

With reference to contemporary South Africa, adolescents may experience anomie when exposed to various socio-criminogenic risk factors within the domains of the family, school, community or peer group. Exposure to these risk factors may make it difficult for youth to attain socially approved goals such as being successful, through the use of socially acceptable means such as becoming educated or working hard, thus increasing their risk to come into conflict with the law either as a result of using socially unacceptable means to reach their goals, or through striving toward socially unapproved goals due to the strain or anomie experienced in either of the four aforementioned domains.

Youth who are exposed to socio-criminogenic risk factors within their communities (i.e. residing in an impoverished community), may therefore not have access to socially approved means with which to reach their goals and may thus utilise socially unacceptable or deviant means to do so. Similarly, exposure to socio-criminogenic risk factors within the school (i.e. poor academic achievement) or family (i.e. suffering abuse) contexts may cause adolescents to stop striving toward socially approved goals due to the strain they experience as a result of their exposure to socio-criminogenic risk factors.

2.2.2. Description and application of the theory

In his theory on anomie, Merton (1938: 673) focuses on the emphasis society places on achieving well-structured goals (which serves as direction for behaviour) through the use of equally structured (socially acceptable) means with which to reach those goals. These goals are generally represented as desirable for all members of society and include gaining wealth, status and success; through the use of commonly accepted and socially approved means such as education, hard work and financial savings (Burfeind & Bartusch, 2006: 489; Lilly, et. al., 2007: 56; Schmallegger, 2009: 268; Williams & McShane, 2014: 84).

However, these legitimate or socially acceptable means with which to reach goals are unequally distributed throughout society, as well as amongst certain social groupings such as the working class or minorities. These groups may thus be at a disadvantage when trying to access the socially approved means with which to reach their goals, due to restricted access to the legitimate means or resources characteristic of residing in an impoverished community or being raised in a family affected by unemployment.

According to Merton, “when this inequality exists because of the way in which society is structured, the social structure is anomic” (Burfeind & Bartusch, 2006: 489; Lilly, et. al., 2007: 56; Schmalleger, 2009: 268; White & Perrone, 2015: 74; Williams & McShane, 2014: 84). Societal members confronted with these anomic conditions thus experience strain as a result of their inability to reconcile their socially approved goals with their limited opportunities, thereby increasing their probability of employing illegitimate means to reach their goals.

In addition to the strain caused by social inequality due to factors such as poverty, unemployment and relative deprivation; Merton notes three other concerns related to socially approved goals and the means with which to achieve them (Burfeind & Bartusch, 2006: 489; Lilly, et. al., 2007: 56). Firstly, legitimate means may not necessarily be the easiest or quickest method of reaching socially approved goals. It could thus be argued that adolescents exposed to deviant subcultures may have access to illegitimate and socially unacceptable means (more readily available in the context of a youth gang for instance), which would be a more efficient way of gaining financial success in comparison to becoming educated, seeking employment and working toward financial independence (Schmalleger, 2009: 268; Williams & McShane, 2014: 84).

Secondly, disparities exist among diverse groups with regard to the classification of social norms and values as different subcultures may value divergent social norms. These disparities may then cause confusion for youths, as goals may not essentially be equally important or even applicable to all social groupings. The goal of academic achievement as promulgated in the school context, may for instance clash with the goal of being feared and respected as endorsed in the gang context. This differential reinforcement between the goals propagated by the school or conventional society and the peer group respectively, in addition to various challenges normally associated

with outstanding academic achievement, may cause youth to more readily accept and strive for goals in the gang context, as it would perhaps be less time consuming and easier to achieve, or because a stronger level of attachment may exist within the peer group (Burfeind & Bartusch, 2006: 489; Lilly, et. al., 2007: 56; Schmalleger, 2009: 268; Williams & McShane, 2014: 84).

Finally, goals may not always be desirable as not all societal members see the worth in using conventional means to reach goals, particularly when exposed to socio-criminogenic risk factors which generally make it more difficult to reach goals through the use of socially acceptable means. Subsequently, various adaptations to the strain caused by restricted access or other concerns related to the socially approved goals and means, may occur. These adaptations may also be augmented by exposure to various socio-criminogenic risk factors, particularly those related to achieving financial success such as poverty and unemployment in the familial and community contexts, or maintaining a good academic record in the school context, thereby further increasing the probability of coming into conflict with the law (Burfeind & Bartusch, 2006: 489; Lilly, et. al., 2007: 56; Schmalleger, 2009: 268; Williams & McShane, 2014: 84).

2.2.2.1. Modes of adaptation to Anomie

The adaptations to anomie (as referred to in the foregoing section) may vary based on an individual's position in the social structure, specific issues or challenges related to the attainment of socially approved goals, restricted access to legitimate means, and the particular socio-criminogenic risk factors to which the individual is exposed. In this regard, Merton (1938: 676) postulates that an individual may opt to adapt to the strain brought about by the experience of anomie in one of five ways, namely i) by conforming, ii) by becoming innovative, iii) through ritualism, iv) by retreating or v) through rebellion. The specific method of adaptation which the individual decides to utilise, is generally determined by the degree to which he/she accepts and/or rejects the socially approved goal and the socially acceptable means with which to achieve the desired goal (Merton, 1938: 676).

These methods of adapting to strain, also referred to as *Modes of Adaptation* by Merton (1938: 676), are outlined and elucidated in Table 4 below:

Table 4
The modes of adaptation according to Merton's Anomie Theory.

Adaptation	Goals	Means	Description
Conformity	+	+	The most common mode of adaptation in all social classes. The individual accepts both the cultural goals and the institutionalised means with which to achieve them.
Innovation	+	-	When individuals have limited access to legitimate means, they may accept the cultural goals but reject the institutionalised means and turn to illegitimate means to reach their goals.
Ritualism	-	+	Here individuals reject cultural goals but accept the institutionalised means. Individuals who opt for this mode of adaptation display an almost compulsive following of the rules.
Retreatism	-	-	In this mode individuals reject both the cultural goals and the institutionalised means with which to achieve them. These individuals generally tend to withdraw or retreat from society.
Rebellion	±	±	Here individuals reject both the cultural goals and the institutionalised means, and replace them with new ones. This may be a collective adaptation, involving an organised struggle for social change.

(Adapted from Merton, 1938: 676).

With regard to Table 4, (+) signifies acceptance, (-) signifies rejection and (±) signifies rejection and substitution with new goals and standards. The different ways in which individuals could adapt to the strain caused by anomie is discussed in the following section.

2.2.2.1.1. Conformity

Merton (1938: 677) proposed various pathways which individuals could use to manage the strain created by their inability to attain success. When both the cultural goals and socially approved means are maintained, even when access to the means are restricted, an individual remains conforming and would continue to strive toward socially approved goals. This mode of adaptation to anomie which Merton referred to as *Conformity*, is applicable to the majority of societal members. Moreover, it is also applicable to the majority of youth experiencing strain as a result of the presence and influence of various socio-criminogenic risk factors (Lilly, et. al., 2007: 56; Schmalleger, 2009: 268; Williams & McShane, 2014: 85).

Strain could be caused by various risk factors from each of the four domains, including a combination of risk factors from two or more different domains (see section 1.2.4.4.). Youth exposed to these strains would thus be vulnerable to a variety of socio-criminogenic risk factors, increasing their probability of coming into conflict with the law. However, should they choose this mode of adaptation, they would remain law-abiding despite their restricted access to the legitimate resources needed to attain their goals.

With regards to the domestic context, youth who remain conforming would keep on striving towards the socially acceptable goals through the use of socially approved means, despite shortcomings related to the strain caused as a result of their exposure to various social risk factors. These youths would therefore remain law-abiding even when confronted by factors such as poverty within the family, academic failure, weak social ties or residing in a socially disorganised community. It could also be argued that their resilience to the strain caused by anomie and furthered by their exposure to various socio-criminogenic risk factors, could be as a result of certain protective factors such as having supportive relationships with parents, being committed to school or living in a socially organised community (also see section 1.2.4.3.).

The presence of protective factors such as these could thus enhance resilience and serve as an explanation for why a significant number of youth remain conforming, even when exposed to the strain related to anomie or as a result of specific socio-criminogenic risk factors within their family, community, school or peer group (Arthur, et. al., 2002: 576; De Souza da Silveira, et. al., 2012: 348). Bartollas and Schmalleger

(2013: 57) support this and add that conforming youth often accept the goals advocated by society as well as the means to achieve them. These youth therefore “work hard in conventional ways to become a success”.

2.2.2.1.2. Ritualism

In other instances, youth experiencing strain may choose to abandon the socially approved goals, but continue to abide by the social norms and values prescribed to attain them. This mode of adaptation is referred to as *Ritualism*, and individuals who choose to adapt to strain in this way, shift their focus to socially acceptable means even after having rejected the socially approved goals. The means therefore becomes the aspirations of the individual, similar to when one attempts to treat their occupation as a form of security rather than using their occupation as a way of achieving success. In the aforementioned example, maintaining one’s position at work becomes the goal, which allows the individual to resolve the frustration related to unsuccessfully chasing their original goal (Bartollas & Schmalleger, 2013: 58; Lilly, et. al., 2007: 57; Merton, 1938: 678; Williams & McShane, 2014: 85).

Youth who choose this mode of adaptation would also remain law-abiding as their behaviour would still be regulated by the socially approved means (i.e. social norms or laws) regardless of whether they have rejected the socially approved goals (i.e. striving towards success or status). It could also be argued that these youth are less affected by the strain they experience as a result of anomie or their exposure to certain socio-criminogenic risk factors, due to the presence of specific protective factors such as being female or having friends who engage in prosocial behaviours (also see section 1.2.4.3.). These youth would therefore remain law-abiding even when facing adversity, as a number of protective factors such as having supportive relationships with parents or peers, or having friends who engage in pro-social behaviours would mitigate their exposure to strain (Bartollas & Schmalleger, 2013: 58; Lilly, et. al., 2007: 57; Williams & McShane, 2014: 85).

For many other youth, the strain they experience may prove to be intolerable due to the disparity between the socially approved goals and the means with which to achieve them. Subsequently, these individuals may choose to reject the socially approved goals, or they may opt to use illegitimate means to reach these goals. Thus Merton

(1938: 677) delineated three deviant modes of adaptation, namely *Innovation*, *Retreatism* and *Rebellion*. These modes are discussed in the succeeding section.

2.2.2.1.3. Innovation

According to Merton (1938: 677) and Bartollas and Schmallegger (2013: 57), adolescents may accept the socially approved goals, but reject the acceptable means with which to achieve them. This mode of adaptation is referred to as *Innovation*. Thus, as a result of strain or exposure to socio-criminogenic risk factors, these youth pursue illegitimate paths to reach their goals. Williams and McShane (2014: 85) further this by adding that innovative (illegitimate) means may be more readily available to youth in comparison to legitimate means, and that these socially unacceptable avenues towards success may also be more efficient with regard to the attainment of goals.

Domestically, some youth may face a myriad of challenges related to achieving the socially approved goals through the use of socially acceptable means. These challenges can be linked to a number of socio-criminogenic risk factors, and would subsequently increase the risk for youth to come into conflict with the law. In terms of socio-criminogenic risk factors within the family, these challenges could include a) low socio-economic status, b) parental criminality and c) abuse or neglect within the family. Challenges in the context of the school could include d) academic failure or poor academic performance. With regard to the peer group, e) deviant peers and gang membership could be associated with the pursuit of illegitimate means with which to achieve social goals, while challenges in the community context could centre on f) high crime-rate communities and g) the availability of alcohol and illicit substances. These challenges are discussed in the succeeding section.

a) Low socio-economic status

With reference to large-scale social disorganisation, unemployment and poverty in contemporary South Africa (Khan & Singh, 2014: 109), a large segment of the youth populace may be reared in families with very limited access to legitimate resources and opportunities necessary to attain socially approved goals. These youth are then more vulnerable in terms of coping with the strain which often accompanies living in poverty that they may choose to use illegitimate avenues to reach their goal of attaining success, financial stability or status. When coupled with socio-criminogenic risk factors from other domains such as residing in a high crime-rate neighbourhood or youth

gang-membership, the risk of coming into conflict with the law is even greater as more illegitimate opportunities would be made available to young persons who are already vulnerable due to their low socio-economic status (Siegel, 2002: 4; Van der Merwe & Dawes, 2007: 100). The more access these youth have to illegitimate opportunities, the greater the possibility that they may opt to become innovative with regard to goal attainment.

b) Parental criminality

Some youth who are raised in households where their parents transgress would also be more vulnerable to misconduct, as they could learn to be antisocial through mimicking the behaviour displayed by their parents (Burton, 2007: 20; Mhlongo, 2005: 38). This would have a negative effect on their socialisation as they could become desensitised to law-violating behaviour, or see it as an acceptable method with which to reach their goals, resolve disputes or gain status. Parental criminality may also cause youth to reject any pro-social behaviour taught by parents, further affecting their socialisation and increasing their risk of coming into conflict with the law (Bezuidenhout, 2013: 77).

Youth raised by parents with a favourable attitude toward crime may also be less susceptible to the morals and values taught within the school context, as this would be in contrast with the behaviours and norms within the family. This differential reinforcement between the primary (family) and secondary (school) socialisation agents may also have a negative influence on the socialisation process, creating the possibility that adolescents may themselves resort to crime in order to attain socially approved goals (Howitt, 2015: 75).

c) Abuse or neglect within the family

When young persons are neglected or abused within the family unit, they may experience lower levels of parental attachment which could negatively affect any parental efforts to properly socialise youth. Various shortcomings related to this 'inadequate' socialisation due to their experiences of abuse or neglect, may then increase the possibility that youth could come into conflict with the law. These shortcomings may make adolescents more inclined to use illegitimate means to reach their goals, and could include acting irrationally, rejection of authority, non-conformity to the rules set by parents or society in general, poor judgment and low self-esteem.

Suffering abuse may also increase the possibility for youth to become desensitised to violence and aggression, subsequently learning to utilise it as a mechanism to achieve social goals, solve disputes or gain status (Spatz-Widom, 1989: 162).

d) Academic failure or poor academic performance

Academic failure and poor academic performance can also be seen as a pathway to using socially unacceptable means to reach goals for a number of reasons. Young persons may fail to achieve status as a result of academic failure, and may become detached from school or demotivated to attend school. This in turn, may cause low levels of bonding to school, neutralising the effectiveness of the school to function as a secondary socialisation agent (Ntshangase, 2015: 45). In addition to this, academic failure could also lead to restricted access to legitimate employment opportunities thereby increasing the risk of using illegal avenues to obtain success or to survive. Youth who perform poorly at school could thus have a higher tendency to use innovation as a mode of adaptation in response to the strain caused by exposure to the socio-criminogenic risk factors within the school context (Bartollas & Schmallegger, 2013: 125).

e) Deviant peers and gang membership

Young persons who experience strain due to conditions in the family or school domain are more vulnerable to joining a gang or forming part of a deviant subculture. Exposure to the negative influence of other youth in the gang or deviant subculture may then increase their vulnerability to come into conflict with the law as illegitimate activities could be reinforced in the context of the subculture, decreasing the effectiveness of the family and school to adequately socialise youth, but also because adolescents may become desensitised to crime or violence, increasing their probability of transgressing the law in order to maintain their position in the subculture or to achieve status and respect in the context of the gang (Bender, 2010: 469; Harris, 2009: 55; Siegel, 2002: 187). Deviant peer groups and youth gangs would also provide adolescents with access to a plethora of illegitimate avenues for goal attainment, thereby contributing to the rejection of socially acceptable means which are more time consuming and which require more effort, and strengthening their inclination toward misconduct as an easier, quicker and more efficient route toward the attainment of their goals (Pacheco, 2012: 20; Phillips & Maritz, 2015: 53).

f) High crime-rate communities

Youth residing in high crime-rate communities could also opt to become innovative when striving toward socially approved goals as these communities would offer numerous illegitimate avenues for youth to attain their aspirations. Communities characterised by violence, high crime-rates and gang membership would also negatively affect the socialisation of the youth residing there, as these youth would be exposed to numerous negative role models from which to learn behaviour, particularly socially unacceptable behaviour (Williams, 2008: 273). Adolescents could thus see adults reaching their goals or achieving status through unlawful avenues, and learn that if they are to achieve their own goals, that making use of illegitimate opportunities could be a faster, easier and more efficient way of doing so. These negative role models to which youth are exposed, are also in an optimal position to teach youth the skills and techniques needed to successfully participate in criminal enterprises (Williams: 2008: 275).

This could be particularly prevalent in instances where adolescents are already vulnerable as a result of the strain they experience due to their exposure to socio-criminogenic risk factors in other domains such as the family, school or peer group. In addition to this, youth residing in high crime-rate communities could also become accustomed to crime and violence, subsequently viewing it as an acceptable means with which to attain socially approved goals, resolve disputes or gain status (Bezuidenhout, 2013: 75).

g) The availability of alcohol and illicit substances

Residing in high crime-rate communities would have a similar effect on the behaviour of youth as residing in a community where alcohol and illicit substances are freely available or are frequently abused, as young persons may then have a higher propensity of using or abusing these substances themselves. Youth would then be at risk of jeopardising their social goals through becoming addicted to these substances, or they could come into conflict with the law as a means of gaining access to alcohol or illegal substances (Bartol & Bartol, 2017: 490; Bezuidenhout, 2013: 53). The use or abuse of substances may also negatively affect young persons' bonds to the family or to conventional society, thereby further increasing their risk of coming into conflict with the law or utilising illegitimate means to achieve their goals. Youth would also be more

susceptible to gang membership as a means of gaining access to illegal substances or alcohol, increasing the risk of conflicting with the law, or they may become detached from school increasing their risk of using illegitimate avenues as a means of survival. These substances could also cause adolescents to be more irrational or violent, influencing the way in which they would react to strain and possibly making them more inclined to transgress (Benekos & Merlo, 2009: 97; Madu & Matla, 2003: 122).

2.2.2.1.4. Retreatism

In addition to accepting the socially approved goals but using innovative means to reach these goals as discussed in the foregoing section, youth may also reject both the socially approved goals as well as the socially acceptable means with which to achieve them. This mode of adaptation is referred to as *Retreatism*. Youth opting to adapt to strain in this way, therefore choose not to be innovative, but at the same time still need to resolve their inability to reach important goals in life (Lilly, et. al., 2007: 56; Merton, 1938: 677; Schmallegger, 2009: 268; Williams & McShane, 2014: 85). This inability to reach goals could be caused by strain as a result of exposure to various socio-criminogenic risk factors such as socio-economic disadvantage, academic failure or a lack of access to both legitimate as well as illegitimate avenues for goal attainment. Subsequently, adolescents would “simply quit trying to get ahead and retreat from standard modes of behaviour. This pattern is best seen as dropping out of society and is exemplified by vagrants, alcoholics, and drug addicts” (Merton, 1938: 677; Williams & McShane, 2014: 86).

This retreatist mode of adaptation could also be particularly relevant to South African youth, as young persons between the ages of 12 and 22 years form part of a ‘high-risk’ age cohort for both victimisation and contravening the law as discussed in section 1.1. (Burton, et. al., 2009: xiii; Clark, 2012: 77; Khan & Singh, 2014: 105). Youth in this age group can thus be categorised as a particularly marginalised and vulnerable group due to their increased risk for both victimisation and transgressing, as well as the challenges associated with this particular phase of life-span development (see sections 1.1. and 1.4.2.1.). Some youth in this age group could thus be susceptible to withdrawing from society as a result of the strain they experience due to their exposure to socio-criminogenic risk factors. Their withdrawal from society could then place them

at risk of using substances such as alcohol or drugs, subsequently also increasing their risk of coming into conflict with the law (Williams & McShane, 2014: 86).

According to Madu and Matla (2003: 122) young people are tempted to use drugs or other substances as it is said to relieve stress and frustration, alleviate boredom, and to provide an escape from the strife of daily life. Parry, Myers, Morojele, Flisher, Bhana, Donson and Plüddemann (2004: 430) however, caution against the use of substances such as drugs and alcohol, as it may have a variety of adverse effects on the health and wellbeing of the user. These effects include, but are not limited to, an increased risk for injury or death from interpersonal violence, an increased risk of engaging in 'risky' sexual behaviour, academic underachievement, truancy, suicidal behaviour and coming into conflict with the law.

In addition to using illicit substances, youth who withdraw from society may also opt to withdraw from the school and family unit. In so doing, their access to legitimate opportunities could also become restricted, increasing their propensity to come into conflict with the law as a means of survival. Furthermore, exposure to socio-criminogenic risk factors could also result in adolescents withdrawing from their communities due to limited access to resources, feelings of detachment from the family or community, academic failure and the presence of deviant subgroups whom may act as a surrogate family. Exposure to risk factors such as these, and opting to retreat from conventional social institutions as a result thereof, could then place youth at an increased risk of coming into conflict with the law as they may start to engage in illicit substance use, become vagrants, or engage in sex work as a means of survival (Williams & McShane, 2014: 86).

2.2.2.1.5. Rebellion

The final mode of adapting to the strain caused by exposure to various socio-criminogenic risk factors, is referred to as *Rebellion*. This mode of adaptation involves rejecting both the socially approved goals and means, and substituting it with a new set of goals and means which are more readily accessible or more easily attained. However, this mode of adaptation "was designed to account for some, not all, forms of deviant behaviour customarily described as criminal or delinquent" (Bartollas & Schmallegger, 2013: 58; Merton, 1938: 678). It could therefore, be argued that this mode of adaptation focuses on the strain caused by the inconsistency between

socially approved goals and having access to the legitimate means with which to achieve them. Where in some cases youth may rebel and come into conflict with the law, while in other cases may remain law-abiding. In the domestic context, youth are confronted by an array of socio-political and economic issues ranging from academic failure to social disorganisation and positively orientated civic values and beliefs regarding crime (also see section 1.2.4.4.), which could cause them to reject the socially approved goals and means, and formulate new goals and more accessible means with which to achieve them.

Youth who perform poorly at school due to economic disadvantage, may perhaps give up on their dreams of being a physician and instead create a new goal which they could more easily attain, such as being respected or feared by their peers. Similarly, youth who are abused in the context of the family may perhaps give up on the goal of being a positive role model to younger siblings, and become part of a youth gang (surrogate family) more inclined to socially unacceptable goals, thereby placing both themselves and younger siblings at risk of victimisation or of coming into conflict with the law.

2.2.3. Evaluation of the theory

According to Burfeind and Bartusch (2006: 491), anomie theory has a natural appeal as the emphasis on financial success in society is irrefutable, whilst simultaneously utilitarian norms for achieving success are disproportionately distributed. Anomie theory thus, infers that a single goal (financial success) applies to society as a whole and that widespread consensus exists regarding this goal. However, numerous researchers and theorists have suggested that individuals and groups may seek a variety of goals, and that goals may differ depending on age, peer group association, social standing and individual preference. Additionally, the consideration of whether adolescents instantly adopt the goal of financial success should also be considered, as young persons may be more concerned with immediate- rather than long-term success. Subsequently, goals associated with financial success (i.e. educational achievement or professional status) may be seen as less important in comparison to more immediate goals such as popularity, peer group affiliation, independence or athletic success (Burfeind & Bartusch, 2006: 491; Elliot, Ageton & Canter, 1979: 5).

Despite this critique related to the value placed on economic goals, the major premise of Robert Merton's anomie theory is that legitimate opportunities to achieve one's goals remain unequally distributed, regardless of whether the goal relates to financial success, independence or athletic success. Without sufficient access to the socially approved means, societal members will experience strain and could attempt to find an alternative means by which to achieve their goals. This strain related to the unequal distribution of socially acceptable means, could therefore lead to the use of socially unacceptable methods with which to achieve the desired goals.

Exposure to socio-criminogenic risk factors such as low socio-economic status, family conflict, academic failure, weak social ties, social disorganisation, or gang membership could thus result in strain; increasing the proclivity of youth to become *innovative*, to *retreat* or to *rebel* when striving toward their goals. It could thus be argued that the strain adolescents experience as a result of their exposure to various socio-criminogenic risk factors, could increase their likelihood of coming into conflict with the law, regardless of whether their goal is to achieve financial freedom, academic success or popularity.

Williams and McShane (2014: 87) support this and note that "anomie theory comments on extreme emphases on cultural goals and accompanying cultural messages that assert the importance of striving for those goals. Unless the means to reach the goals are equitably distributed in society, the overemphasis on goals and inequality of means will result in socially structured and patterned rates of deviance". Hence, groups or individuals who have greater access to the socially approved means are mostly conforming, while those with the least access to the means as a result of their exposure to strain inducing socio-criminogenic risk factors such as poverty or neighbourhood disorganisation, have higher rates of deviance irrespective of the type of goal they are striving toward.

Anomie theory has also been criticised for being class-biased, as crime is allegedly concentrated in areas characterised by low socio-economic status due to the unavailability of legitimate avenues for success. In this regard, Burfeind and Bartusch (2006: 491) caution against a 'narrow reading' of anomie theory, and state that "Merton does indeed include a structural component to the theory, arguing that the lack of opportunity is disproportionately experienced by lower-class individuals. However,

Merton's primary theoretical depiction of the imbalance between goals and means applies equally to individuals in other social classes". It can subsequently be argued that anomie theory relates to a variety of norm violations, and even though transgressions are more likely to be committed by working-class individuals because they, "like individuals from other social classes, desire success", undeservedly lack the opportunities and resources to achieve it (Burfeind & Bartusch, 2006: 491).

This relationship between restricted access to either the socially approved goals or to the legitimate means with which to achieve them, and the exposure to socio-criminogenic risk factors should therefore be noted, as various risk factors within the domain of the family, community, school or peer group have the potential to cause strain, thereby increasing the probability for youth to come into conflict with the law. These risk factors include unemployment/poverty within the family, social disorganisation, academic failure, and antisocial peer group association respectively (Bezuidenhout, 2013: 70; Shader, 2001: 4). Robert Merton's Anomie theory, is therefore still among the most influential of all criminological theories and continues to attract commentary and research, although presented as far back as 1938 (Williams & McShane, 2014: 87). Since then, several modifications have been offered, the most notable being Richard Cloward and Lloyd Ohlin's *Differential Opportunity Theory* and Travis Hirschi's *Social Bonding Theory* (Williams & McShane, 2014: 87). These more 'contemporary' theories are discussed in the succeeding sections.

2.3. Richard Cloward and Lloyd Ohlin's Differential Opportunity Theory (1960)

According to Box (1981: 102), Richard Cloward and Lloyd Ohlin's Differential Opportunity theory was a milestone in the development of theories pertaining to youth in conflict with the law. Cloward and Ohlin (1960) sought to explain the development of deviant subcultures by integrating the theoretical contributions of Émile Durkheim and Robert Merton's anomie theory with Edwin Sutherland's theory of Differential Association. While Anomie theory stresses differential access to the legitimate means needed to achieve socially approved goals, and Differential Association theory recognises the idea of adaptable access to illegitimate means, Cloward and Ohlin unite these two positions by suggesting that adolescents have differential access to both legitimate and illegitimate means (Bartollas & Schmallegger, 2013: 60; Vetter & Silverman, 1986: 321; Williams & McShane, 2014: 94).

They propose that working-class youth live in a society which creates high socio-economic aspirations and promotes an ideology of equal opportunity for all, whilst restricting the opportunities available to youth in the working-class. Deviance thus ensues, as a result of the disparity between what these adolescents are led to believe and what is realistically available to them (Vetter & Silverman, 1986: 321; White & Perrone, 2015: 78).

Cloward and Ohlin (1960: 86) explain this by stating that "...the disparity between what lower class youth are led to want and what is actually available to them is the source of a major problem of adjustment. Adolescents who form delinquent subcultures, we suggest have internalised an emphasis upon conventional goals. Faced with limitations on legitimate avenues of access to these goals, and unable to revise their aspirations downward, they experience intense frustration; the exploration of nonconformist alternatives may be the result". In contrast to the anomie theory which emphasises legitimate opportunities, the authors highlight the prevalence of illegitimate opportunity structures, which is as developed and restricted as the legitimate opportunity structure. As such, social class thus determines an individual's ability to participate in both the conventional and unconventional avenues to success (Bartollas & Schmallegger, 2013: 60; Cloward & Ohlin, 1960: 131; Vetter & Silverman, 1986: 322; Williams & McShane, 2014: 100).

2.3.1. Historical background on the theory

Criminological theories developed during the 1950s and early 1960s focused primarily on youth misconduct, and sought to explain the origin and context in which different gang formations developed, a phenomenon which many theorists during this time believed to be the most common form of delinquency. In 1955 and 1960 respectively, Albert Cohen, as well as Cloward and Ohlin combined the work of Sutherland with Merton's anomie theory. Solomon Kobrin, a researcher at the Chicago Area Project, also had a major influence on the development of subculture theories. In 1951, Kobrin introduced the idea of an integrated community, a concept which according to Williams and McShane (2014: 96) refers to the degree of social control present in any given community.

This degree of control is “dependent on how well the criminal element is organised as well as on the character of its relationship with the community’s official leadership. A community that is organised and integrated has greater social control over the behaviour of juveniles than a community where integration is lacking” (Williams & McShane, 2014: 96). This level of control exists because the criminal element in a given community has a vested interest in managing and preventing violence because they reside in that very same community with their families. Subsequently, they would use their power and status to ensure the safety of their respective communities.

Based on Kobrin’s notion of an integrated community, Cloward and Ohlin (1960) argued that the formation of deviant subcultures was contingent on the degree of integration present in the community, as communities without a stable criminal structure would fail to offer illegitimate avenues to success as there would be no criminal enterprise to join and work one’s way up through the ranks, nor would there be any opportunities to properly learn a criminal trade. In contrast, individuals who resided in communities which did offer criminal avenues for success could work their way up through the ranks of an illicit business, and could acquire the resources needed to enable them to move over to legitimate business. According to Williams and McShane (2014: 100), “this is exactly what Kobrin meant by community integration: Leaders in legitimate and illegitimate businesses share the goal of profitability, membership in religious and social organisations, and participation in the political process. And, of course, they share the desire for safe streets in the neighbourhood where they live”.

Based on Kobrin’s idea of an integrated community offering numerous illegitimate avenues for success to youth who reside there, the importance of socio-criminogenic risk factors in the community context should be noted. Communities characterised as socially disorganised areas or as having high rates of crime and gang activity, would in fact offer youth a myriad of illegitimate avenues with which to reach their desired goals. These communities, therefore, fit Kobrin’s depiction of integrated communities. In addition to the anomie theory formulated by Durkheim and Merton, Kobrin’s work on integrated communities was the final major influence on the differential opportunity theory formulated by Richard Cloward and Lloyd Ohlin in 1960.

2.3.2. Description and application of the theory

According to Cloward and Ohlin (1960: 131), three different subcultures could occur in integrated communities which do offer illegitimate avenues for success, namely the *criminal*, *conflict* and *retreatist* subcultures. The specific type of subculture which could form in a given community, is dependent on the degree of integration within that community, as well as on the degree of control which the community is able to exert over the behaviour of youth residing there. In fully integrated communities, youth gang subcultures would act almost as an apprenticeship for adolescents, thus giving rise to a criminal subculture. Non-integrated communities lacking a well-organized criminal structure, would exert very little control over the behaviour of youth, giving rise to a conflict subculture. Communities where youth are denied access to both legitimate and illegitimate opportunities, would develop what Cloward and Ohlin referred to as a retreatist subculture (Bartollas & Schmalleger, 2013: 60; Cloward & Ohlin, 1960: 131; Vetter & Silverman, 1986: 322; Williams, 2012: 358; Williams & McShane, 2014: 100). The development of each of the aforementioned subcultures is illustrated in Figure 1 below:

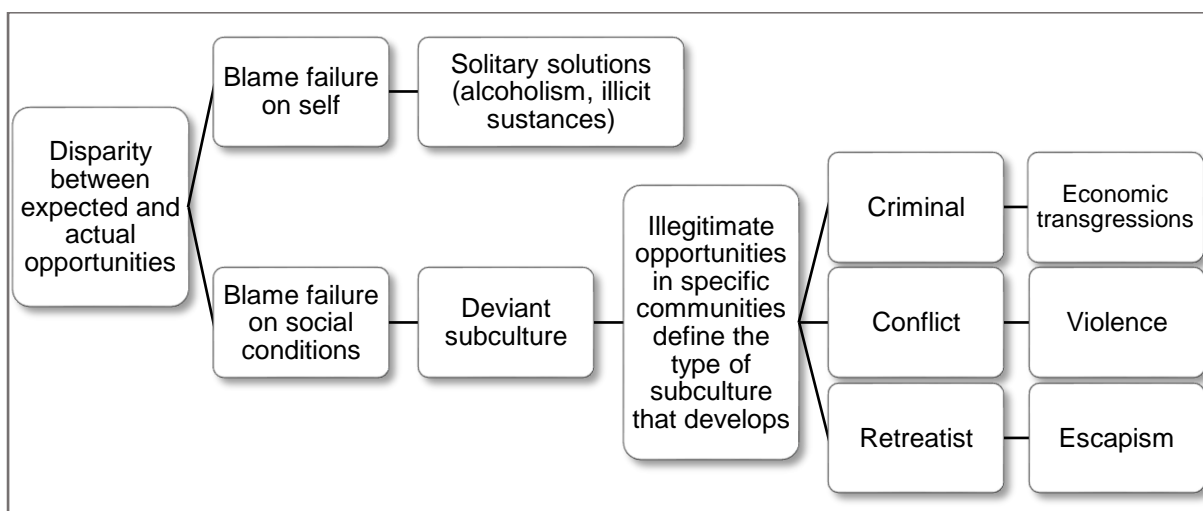


Figure 1: *Richard Cloward and Lloyd Ohlin's Differential Opportunity Theory* (Adapted from Vetter & Silverman, 1986: 323).

As discussed in section 2.3., Cloward and Ohlin (1960) note that working-class youth live in a society which creates high socio-economic aspirations and promotes an ideology of equal opportunity for all, while restricting the opportunities for youth in the working-class. Youth who experience this disparity between their expected and actual opportunities may then blame their failure to achieve socially approved goals on

themselves (and use substances as a coping mechanism), or they may blame their failure to achieve societal goals on social conditions (and form deviant subcultures which could provide alternative means of goal attainment). These social conditions are linked to socio-criminogenic risk factors such as the experience of poverty, parental neglect, academic failure, weak social ties, gang membership or social disorganisation; and could lead to the development of three distinct subcultures as illustrated in Figure 1. The characteristics of each of the aforementioned subcultures are discussed in the subsequent section.

2.3.2.1. The criminal subculture

In communities where youth have access to well-established criminal enterprises, criminal subcultures are likely to emerge. Within these subcultures, the primary focus would be on profit-making activities such as extortion, fraud, shoplifting and theft as means with which to achieve financial success, and the use of violence would be minimal. Criminal subcultures would also provide a platform for socialisation through which new recruits learn to value and respect older members, as well as to adopt deviant lifestyles and behaviours. These subcultures exist in communities where there is an integration of legitimate and illegitimate groups, and in this way would emphasise the learning of social roles and the value of role models with regard to the organisation of subcultural activities. Adolescents would therefore, learn and acquire the skills needed to contravene the law through observing and associating with older youth, who in turn learn from the adults in the community (Bartollas & Schmallegger, 2013: 60; Cloward & Ohlin, 1960: 162; DeKeseredy, et. al., 2005: 41; Vetter & Silverman, 1986: 322; Williams, 2012: 358; Williams & McShane, 2014: 101).

Similar to the innovative mode of adaptation to anomie characterised Merton (see section 2.2.2.1.), youth who are exposed to socio-criminogenic risk factors such as 'high crime-rate' communities, communities with high rates of gang activity or communities with pro-social attitudes toward crime, would be more susceptible to joining a criminal subculture as these communities would offer access to well-established criminal enterprises and illegitimate avenues for success. Youth would therefore be at risk of coming into conflict with the law as they may become desensitised to crime, or adopt unlawful behaviour as an acceptable route toward goal attainment as older transgressors in these communities would serve as role models

from which to learn (Bartollas & Schmallegger, 2013: 60; Cloward & Ohlin, 1960: 162; DeKeseredy, et. al., 2005: 41; Vetter & Silverman, 1986: 322; Williams, 2012: 358; Williams & McShane, 2014: 101).

Youth exposed to socio-criminogenic risk factors within their community, in addition to risk factors within their family such as poor parent-child attachment or parental deviance (see sections 1.2.4.4. and 2.1.1.), would be at even greater risk of joining a criminal subculture as the subculture would then function as a surrogate family providing youth with a sense of belonging, affection and attention. Subsequently, adolescents could display attachment to the subculture, ultimately reinforcing their adherence to illegitimate means and increasing their prospects of coming into conflict with the law. Furthermore, the exposure to risk factors such as poverty or academic failure (limiting one's access to legitimate means) in the absence of protective factors such as associating with prosocial peers (also see section 1.2.4.3.), may often also cause youth to be particularly vulnerable to joining criminal subcultures, as they would not be guarded from the harmful conditions present in communities with stable and well-established criminal structures (Phillips & Maritz, 2015: 53).

2.3.2.2. The conflict subculture

Conflict subcultures tend to develop in socially disorganised communities characterised by high rates of residential mobility; making efforts to develop community stability almost impossible. Violent behaviour amongst youth thus become common in these communities due to restricted access to legitimate channels for success and limited access to stable criminal networks. Additionally, these communities also exercise weak control over the behaviour of youth residing there. This combination of risk factors then leads to the emergence of conflict subcultures, as youth may employ violence as a means of gaining status, relieving repressed feelings of hostility or frustration and because violent behaviour is not limited by race, social class or access to resources. Youth who become part of conflict subcultures would therefore often attempt to gain status through being feared and respected; as violence, property damage and unpredictable behaviour are characterised as hallmarks of these subcultural groupings (Bartollas & Schmallegger, 2013: 60; DeKeseredy, et. al., 2005: 41; Vetter & Silverman, 1986: 324; Williams, 2012: 359; Williams & McShane, 2014: 101).

Having highlighted social disorganisation as a primary risk factor in the emergence of conflict subcultures, it could be surmised that socially disorganised communities tend to create equally disorganised subcultures. Williams and McShane (2014: 101) further this by noting that “transient and unstable relationships in the community are reflected in juvenile interactions, as relationships and role models between youth of different ages would be difficult to sustain. Further, the illegitimate adult role models available to juveniles tend to be individuals who are not successful criminals (compared with those in organised crime)”. It could therefore be assumed that the interactions and learning of adolescents residing in socially disorganised areas, both internationally and domestically, would reflect the nature of the community. Frustration and aggression displayed by adults in these communities due to restricted access to goal attainment, could then be relieved through violent behaviour, which in turn could be modelled by youth who are equally frustrated, thereby increasing their risk of coming into conflict with the law (Williams & McShane, 2014: 101).

2.3.2.3. The retreatist subculture

According to Cloward and Ohlin (1960: 181), a retreatist subculture is likely to be adopted by youth who are ‘double failures’. This term is used to refer to youth who are denied access to legitimate resources, but who also fail to achieve status in a criminal or conflict subculture. Their primary focus is on the use of narcotics, and their criminal involvement is designed to provide them with money for their own illicit substance use. These youth therefore simply ‘give up’ and withdraw from society (Bartollas & Schmallegger, 2013: 60; DeKeseredy, et. al., 2005: 41; Williams, 2012: 359; Williams & McShane, 2014: 101).

Similar to Merton’s retreatist mode of adaptation to strain (see section 2.2.2.1.), youth who are exposed to socio-criminogenic risk factors may reach a point where they decide to abandon their pursuit to achieve status and success, whether legitimately or illegitimately. These youth are then at risk of withdrawing from society and retreating to alcohol and illicit substances, or becoming vagrants. This could be particularly true in instances where adolescents are bombarded by a combination of risk factors from different domains. Therefore, adolescents who suffer abuse in the family, quit school due to academic failure, reside in socially disorganised communities, and are part of peer groups who regularly abuse substances, may be more inclined to adopt this

retreatist approach characterised by Cloward and Ohlin (1960: 181). Youth experiencing circumstances such as these, may thus begin to engage in law-violating behaviour to acquire illicit substances or as a means with which to survive (Bartollas & Schmalleger, 2013: 60; DeKeseredy, et. al., 2005: 41; Williams, 2012: 359; Williams & McShane, 2014: 101).

2.3.3. Evaluation of the theory

Vetter and Silverman (1986: 325) criticise Cloward and Ohlin for overemphasising class structure in relation to the formation of deviant subcultures. However, the differential opportunity theory may still have value in terms of its application to socio-criminogenic risk factors, despite it being based purely on the working-class structure. It could be argued that specific risk factors which are related to restricted access to resources, such as low socio-economic status, relative deprivation or community disorganisation could perhaps be more prevalent amongst the working-class than amongst the middle- or upper-classes, hence explaining the focus of Cloward and Ohlin.

Furthermore, the development of unique subcultural formations due to the experience of strain resulting from exposure to various socio-criminogenic risk factors remains a valid contributing factor for youth to come into conflict with the law, irrespective of their position in the social structure. It may also be possible that while working-class youth are more exposed to 'economic' risk factors which lead to gang formations, middle- and upper-class youth may be exposed to numerous other risk factors such as poor parental supervision or a lack of attachment to school, which could have a similar effect on their behaviour.

Thus, even though various theorists including Cohen, Cloward and Ohlin, and Miller regard gang subcultures as a predominantly working-class phenomenon, it is not exclusive to this class structure. With regard to contemporary South Africa, several youth subcultures display numerous elements highlighted in Cloward and Ohlin's gang typology, which could prove useful in both conflict reduction, as well as in the development of protective factors aimed at improving access to legitimate resources regardless of the social position of the recipient.

2.4. Travis Hirschi's Social Control Theory (1969)

According to Bartollas and Schmallegger (2013: 62), Travis Hirschi is the theorist “most closely identified” with social control or social bonding theory. Social control theories propose that youth come into conflict with the law when their bond to society is weakened or broken, and as such ascribe crime and delinquency to social institutions such as family structures, peer groups, the community and educational institutions (Hirschi, 2002: 16). Rather than focusing on the reasons why individuals contravene the law, social control theories emphasise the factors which keep individuals law-abiding (Hirschi, 1969: 10; McLaughlin & Newburn, 2010: 124; Tierney, 2006: 331). Subsequently, Williams and McShane (2014: 164) note that “some social control theories demonstrate a view of human nature that reflects the beliefs of Thomas Hobbes, a seventeenth-century English philosopher who was convinced humans are basically evil”. However, a critical component of social control theories lie in the explanation of the factors which prohibit individuals from contravening the law, rather than emphasising those innate factors which motivate criminality.

For Hirschi (2002: 16) these factors were related to various elements of the social bond, elements which he identified as attachment, commitment, involvement and belief. Thus, if an individual was sufficiently bonded to societal norms and values (i.e. had a strong sense of attachment, commitment, involvement and belief) pro-social behaviour would ensue. In contrast, when the social bond is weakened or broken, an individual would not be bonded to societal norms, leaving them vulnerable to engage in deviant behaviour. With regard to the social bond described by Hirschi (2002: 16), it could be argued that the strength of this bond is weakened when adolescents are exposed to socio-criminogenic risk factors such as family turmoil or weak social ties. Similarly, it could also be argued that protective factors (as identified in section 1.2.4.3.) are synonymous, or at least related to the elements of the social bond identified by Hirschi (1969).

2.4.1. Historical background on the theory

Hirschi (1969) elaborated on the work of other social control theorists in an attempt to clarify what was meant by a social bond. Similar to Durkheim, Hirschi believed that human behaviour reflects diverging degrees of morality, and argued that internalised norms, conscience and the desire for approval, were central elements for conventional

behaviour. According to Williams and McShane (2014: 171), Hirschi noted that an individual becomes 'free' to engage in law-violating behaviour when their bond to society was weakened or broken. During an interview with Clemens Bartollas in 1985, he noted that social disorganisation was at the root of his approach and rejected the idea that any motivation was necessary for individuals to contravene the law. He viewed human beings as self-interested and "ready to act in a fashion that provides the greatest benefits" (Williams & McShane, 2014: 171). Furthermore, he noted that society (social bonds) served as a restraint on that behaviour. However, when the restraint becomes undone (when social bonds are weakened or broken), self-interested behaviour yet again emerges.

2.4.2. Description and application of the theory

Hirschi (1969: 16) characterises four elements necessary for an individual to maintain their bond to societal norms, namely attachment to prosocial others, commitment to socially approved goals, involvement in prosocial activities and a sense of belief in social norms and values. These four elements are interrelated and affect the bond between an individual and society. When one element is weakened or broken (i.e. parental attachment), it would have a negative effect on the remaining three elements (i.e. commitment, involvement and belief). The aforementioned elements are illustrated in Figure 2 below, and discussed in the following section.

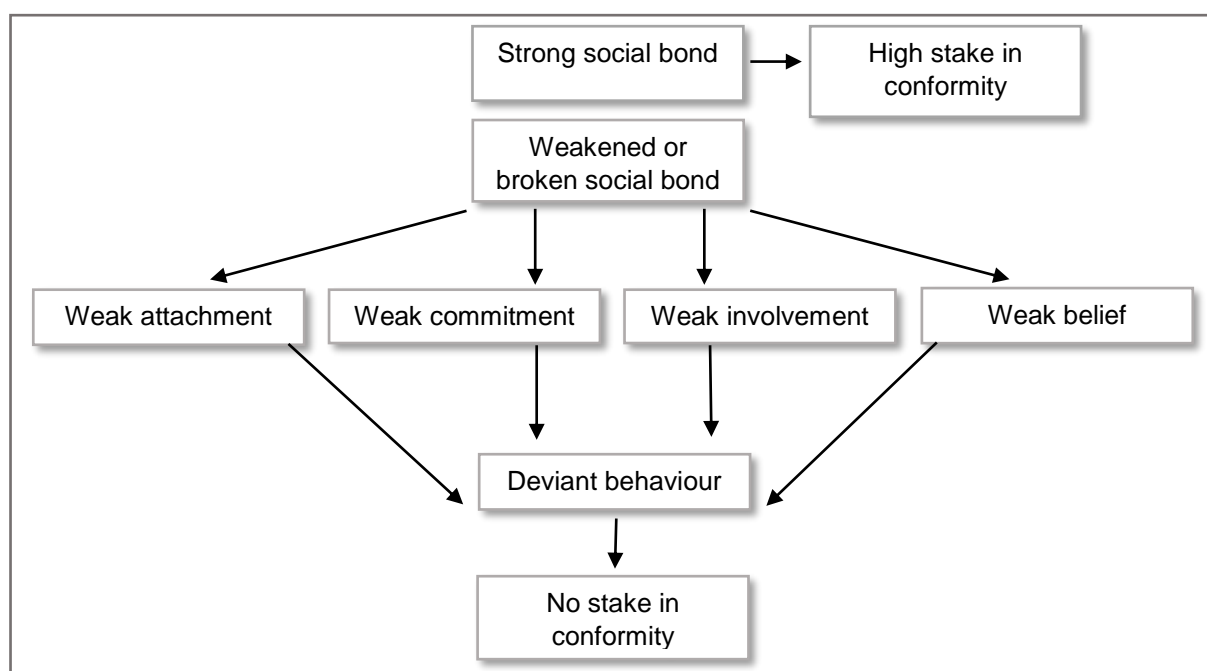


Figure 2: *Travis Hirschi's Social Control Theory*
(Adapted from Bartollas & Schmalleger, 2013: 63).

2.4.2.1. Attachment

Even though the four elements of the social bond function interdependently, Williams and McShane (2014: 172) note the significance of attachment, as the strength of the attachment an individual has to prosocial others such as parents, friends and positive role models, or to prosocial institutions such as school, church and sport clubs can inhibit deviance. For Hirschi (1969: 18) “the essence of internalisation of norms, conscience, or super-ego thus lies in the attachment of the individual to others”. This attachment to significant others would therefore include the affection and respect adolescents have for parents, teachers and friends. The stronger the level of attachment, the greater the likelihood that adolescents will consider their relationship with significant others when he/she is tempted to contravene social rules.

Vetter and Silverman (1986: 347) concur and further this by stating that norm violations would be viewed as actions which oppose the wishes and expectations of these significant others. Thus, youth who share a strong level of attachment with parents, teachers or other pro-social individuals would not wish these individuals to be disappointed in them, and as a result would avoid behaviour which these significant others deem as unacceptable or inappropriate. Hirschi (1969: 19) also believed that parental attachment is an essential variable in the reduction of conflict, as parents are responsible for the initial socialisation of the child and the internalisation of social norms. Subsequently, adolescents need to maintain a strong level of attachment to at least one parent if they are to develop a conscience or superego.

The attachment element identified by Hirschi (1969: 16), may therefore function as a protective factor (see section 1.2.4.3.) which buffers against the harmful effects of exposure to socio-criminogenic risk factors. When youth share a strong level of attachment to school, their family, or prosocial peers, it means that to some extent they are bonded to the moral order and as such would be restrained from contravening the law. In this regard, exposure to various socio-criminogenic risk factors (see sections 1.2.4.4. and 2.1.1.) may weaken or break the child’s bond to society, thereby increasing his/her risk of coming into conflict with the law.

As noted by Hirschi (1969: 19), parental attachment or attachment to prosocial others is crucial in establishing a bond to the moral order. Risk factors within the family unit such as large family size, substance abuse, discord within the home, divorce, abuse

and socio-economic challenges, therefore pose a serious threat to the conventional behaviour of youth. The introduction of protective factors such as improving parent-child relations or establishing strong bonds with teachers or mentors, may therefore be crucial in instances where youth are exposed to the aforementioned risk factors.

According to Vetter and Silverman (1986: 348), Hirschi's own research findings support this, as his data indicated lower chances for misconduct when adolescents were attached to, and identified with parents, school or teachers. His research also highlights the robust tendency for youth to associate with peers whose activities and attitudes are congruent with their own. The introduction of positive role models is therefore a crucial protective factor in this regard, as youth who are part of deviant peer groups, or those raised by antisocial parents would be more vulnerable to adopting similar forms of behaviour.

With regard to the domestic context, the level of attachment youth have to parents, teachers and other prosocial individuals, is somewhat disconcerting as many young people are exposed to a myriad of socio-criminogenic risk factors which threaten their level of attachment to significant others. Subsequently, high divorce rates, familial abuse, negative attitudes toward school, unmotivated educators, the loss of parents due the HIV/Aids pandemic and pro-social beliefs regarding crime, are factors which make South African youth particularly vulnerable in terms of both their attachment to pro-social individuals or institutions, and increase their risk of coming into conflict with the law.

It should also be noted that youth may become attached to deviant subcultures (a socio-criminogenic risk factor within the peer group domain), increasing their risk of non-conformity as these groups approve of socially unacceptable behaviour. This concurs with Hirschi's (1969: 19) emphasis on parental attachment, as risk factors within the family can be seen as a primary factor motivating adolescents to form part of deviant subcultures or gangs. In this regard, it is essential to gain a better understanding of the socio-criminogenic risk factors highlighted above, with the reduction of conflict as aim (also see sections 1.5.1. and 1.5.3.).

2.4.2.2. Commitment

The second element of the social bond is commitment to socially acceptable activities and social values (Hirschi, 1969: 20). Ideally, adolescents should be committed to such an extent that they are willing to invest time, energy and self into achieving socially approved goals. Commitment may also represent the investment adolescents have already built up in conventional society, and is related to education, a good reputation, or other socially approved goals. When youth who are committed considers the cost of contravening the law, they would also consider the risk of losing the investment already made in conventional behaviour. Hirschi (1969: 20) adds that youth who are committed to conventional values and activities develop a stake in conformity, and as a result would refrain from coming into conflict with the law.

Vetter and Silverman (1986: 349) substantiate this and note that youth with high educational aspirations often display low rates of delinquency. Furthermore, the risk of coming into conflict with the law systematically increases when adolescents lack commitment, as they would then be more inclined to engage in adult activities such as the consumption of alcohol or illicit substances, consequently making them more likely to transgress.

Commitment therefore also functions as a buffer, mediating the harmful impact of exposure to socio-criminogenic risk factors which weaken one's bond to social norms, and increases the risk of transgressions. Youth who reside in communities which offer limited access to education, which lack pro-social recreational activities, or where limited resources are available, are therefore extremely vulnerable of contravening the law as they would have little chance of committing to pro-social goals such as education or excelling in sports. The risk would be even greater when adolescents lack attachment to conventional persons, as this could still serve as a buffer, even when commitment is weakened or absent. In this regard, the elements of the social bond function in a similar fashion as the socio-criminogenic risk factors, in that the influence on behaviour is greater when more risk factors are present, so too is the risk of conflict greater when more elements of the social bond are weakened or absent.

2.4.2.3. Involvement

Involvement also protects youth from coming into conflict the law, as it relates to the time and energy available for conventional or unconventional behaviour. As an individual's time and energy is limited, involvement in conventional activities such as school or sports, simply leaves no time or energy for unconventional behaviour (Hirschi, 1969: 22; Williams & McShane, 2014: 172). Bartollas and Schmalleger (2013: 63) further this by adding that "the person involved in conventional activities is tied to appointments, deadlines, working hours, plans, and the like, so the opportunity to commit deviant acts rarely arises. To the extent that he is engrossed in conventional activities, he cannot even think about deviant acts, let alone act out his inclinations". Vetter and Silverman (1986: 349) concur and add that "boys who spent a considerable amount of time doing homework were found to have lower rates of delinquency, while those who felt they had nothing to do were considerably more delinquent". Thus, participation in sport clubs, recreational activities, or other extramural activities could serve to increase levels of conformity and ones stake in conventional society (Vetter & Silverman, 1986: 348; Williams & McShane, 2014: 172).

With reference to criminogenic risk factors, socio-economic factors may place the greatest restriction on the degree to which youth become involved in pro-social activities such as participating sports, as it is nearly impossible to occupy time and energy when these activities cannot be afforded, or when they are absent from schools or communities as a result of budget constraints. This increases the risk of antisocial behaviour, as adolescents would now have more time and energy available to engage in deviant acts. More so, when they are not committed to achieving a particular short, medium or long-term goal, as discussed in the previous section.

South African youth may also be particularly vulnerable in this regard, as many young people may as a consequence of poverty, lack the necessary pro-social outlets with which to occupy their time. Khan and Singh (2014: 109) concur, and make reference to the large-scale social disorganisation, unemployment and poverty in contemporary South Africa. Thus, any attempt at strengthening the social bond should not be devoid of creating platforms in the areas of arts, culture and sports, particularly in impoverished communities, so that youth may have ample activities with which to occupy their time and space. This would be especially important, in cases where

adolescents may have weak attachment to significant others, or lack commitment to socially approved goals.

2.4.2.4. Belief

The final element of the social bond according to Hirschi (1969: 23) is the belief and acknowledgement of societal rules as being reasonable and impartial. When adolescents have respect for social rules and norms, and feel a moral obligation to conform, the greater the likelihood that they will abide by social rules and norms. In contrast, the less adolescents respect and acknowledge social rules, the more likely they will be to come into conflict with the law. Belief should thus include having respect for the laws and values of society, and should ideally be developed through relationships with parents, teachers or mentors in the community (Bartollas & Schmalleger, 2013: 63; Hirschi, 1969: 23; Vetter & Silverman, 1986: 348; Williams & McShane, 2014: 172). Bartollas and Schmalleger (2013: 63) also note the existence of a fundamental chain “from attachment to parents, through to the concern for the approval of persons in positions of authority, to the belief that the rules of society are binding on one’s conduct”.

The degree of belief in social rules would therefore be in jeopardy when youth are reared by parents who are positively inclined towards deviance, reside in ‘high crime-rate’ communities, or when they associate with deviant peers, as this would reinforce their belief that crime is acceptable under certain conditions. Youth could be equally vulnerable when exposed to domestic violence or when they experience weak attachment to parents or other positive individuals, as this would impact negatively on their socialisation and limit the prospects of pro-social beliefs being fostered in the household.

Domestically, adolescents are often exposed to abuse and violence in the family or community context, and are therefore at risk of contravening the law as aggression and violence may decrease their level of attachment and form part of their socialisation process. Subsequently, their belief system would be affected and they may come to view violence and aggression as acceptable ways with which to resolve disputes, achieve goals or gain status. Vetter and Silverman (1986: 349) concur by noting that youth who are attached to parents or teachers are more likely to feel an obligation to obey the law and respect police, limiting their risk of coming into conflict with the law.

2.4.3. Evaluation of the theory

According to Bartollas and Schmallegger (2013: 63) despite the fact that social control theory cannot explain delinquency in its totality, it still has more support today than any other explanation for youth misconduct. Hirschi (1969) was able to test his theory with a population of adolescents, and concepts such as parental attachment, involvement in school and commitment to conventional activities were “clearly defined and measurable” (Bartollas & Schmallegger, 2013: 63). Vetter and Silverman (1969: 349) mention that numerous studies provide data which assessed the various components of Hirschi’s argument, and that there is “considerable research to show that youth who are attached to their parents have lower rates of involvement in delinquency”.

Social control theory is particularly relevant to research pertaining to socio-criminogenic risk factors, as it focuses specifically on social institutions and highlights the significance of protective factors such as parental attachment or commitment to school as factors which could potentially reduce the effects of exposure to numerous criminogenic risk factors. Social control theory is also valuable in that it is not restricted by social class, age, race, gender and the like. According to this perspective, transgressions could be managed by increasing the influence of families, schools, churches and law-abiding peers, thereby providing a practical and realistic starting point in reducing the prospects for youth to come into conflict with the law. These social institutions would thus function as positive role models from which adolescents could learn prosocial behaviour. Subsequently, the importance of social learning is discussed in the following section.

2.5. Albert Bandura’s Social Learning Theory (1971)

Social learning is the offshoot of behaviour theory most relevant to criminology (Siegel, 2004: 156). Social learning theorists, most notably Albert Bandura, suggests that human beings are born devoid of the ability to display violence. Rather, violence and other socially unacceptable behaviours are learnt as a result of an individual’s life experiences which could include observing others acting violently to achieve certain goals, or seeing people being rewarded for violent acts on television. Individuals therefore learn to act aggressively as children, mimicking the behaviour they are exposed to, and consequently internalising violence as a norm with regard to conflict

resolution or goal attainment. These behaviour patterns may persist throughout their lives, increasing their risk of coming into conflict with the law (Bandura, 1971: 2; Siegel, 2004: 156).

2.5.1. Historical Background on the theory

The social learning approach is based on the assumption that most human behaviours are learned responses to life situations. According to Louw, Van Ede and Louw (2005: 55), the philosophical basis of this viewpoint was first developed in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries by a group of British empiricists. Amongst others, John Locke (1632-1704), believed that all ideas enter the mind through sensory experiences and are linked together through associations formed when two or more experiences regularly occur simultaneously. Years later, John Watson (1878-1958) expanded on the idea of Locke, and proposed that ‘virtually all’ behaviour is learnt, arguing that genetic factors only play a role in determining instincts and emotional behaviour. Subsequently, the focus fell on three major types of learning, namely classical conditioning, operant conditioning and observational or social learning (Louw, et. al., 2005: 55).

Classical conditioning was first described by Pavlov in 1890, when he showed that dogs would salivate when given food. While feeding the dog, Pavlov would continually ring a bell, leading to the salivation reflex (a conditioned response). Eventually, the dog would salivate when hearing the sound of the bell, even when no food was given. Dollard and Miller (1950), later furthered Pavlov’s work on classical conditioning, by conducting experiments where rats had to press a lever in order to receive a food pellet. They explained the learning of a response such as pressing a lever, by saying that “the organism has a need (hunger) which is satisfied as a result of the behaviour (the food pellet). A response is therefore reinforced because it is successful in reducing a need or drive”. This approach to learning was referred to as operant conditioning (Louw, et. al., 2005: 58).

In 1971, Skinner rejected this explanation and argued that operant conditioning is simply a type of learning that is observed in a wide variety of routine situations. For Skinner, this method was predominantly used when training circus animals (i.e. the animal is rewarded when performing an action correctly). Therefore, a large proportion of a child’s behaviour is learnt through operant conditioning, as the approval of parents

or teachers may be seen as ways with which to reinforce certain behaviours (Louw, et. al., 2005: 59).

However, contemporary learning theorists such as Albert Bandura (1971), notes that immediate repetition and reinforcement are not essentially necessary for behaviour to occur. Instead, he argued that both children and adults could learn behaviour through observational or social learning, an approach which implies that individuals learn behaviour from observing others. Children would for instance, after seeing an adult act aggressively towards a doll, depict or mimic the behaviour spontaneously or on request at a later stage. According to Louw, et. al. (2005: 60), experiments such as these also demonstrate that the effect of behaviour on the model (i.e. whether the model is rewarded or punished) influences the child's learning as well. The child therefore learns both through observing the behaviour of others, and by noticing whether or not certain behaviours are rewarded or punished. Subsequently, based on the experiments conducted with the doll, Albert Bandura (1971) formulated his observational, or social learning theory as it is more commonly known (Louw, et. al., 2005: 60).

2.5.2. Description and application of the theory

Louw and Edwards (2004: 267) state that Albert Bandura and his colleagues conducted a series of experiments in order to demonstrate the role of modelling in learning new behaviour. Modelling refers to a type of observational learning by which an individual acquires the know-how to reproduce or mimic the behaviour displayed by a model. In one such experiment, children observed an adult acting aggressively toward a 'bobo' doll. One group of children observed the attack in person, the second group watched the attack on video, while the control group watched an adult playing peacefully with the doll. Later the children were allowed to play in the room in which the doll was kept. Both experimental groups who saw the adult acting violently toward the doll (either in person or on video), also responded to the doll in a violent fashion modelling the behaviour they had observed, while the control group who observed a more peaceful interaction with the doll did not show any signs of aggression.

Bandura also conducted an additional experiment in which he compared the influence of observation alone, with the influence of positive (reward) and negative (punishment) reinforcement on imitative behaviour. In this follow-up experiment, one group of

children saw the adult being rewarded for acting aggressively toward the doll, whilst another group watched the adult being punished for acting aggressively. The group which had seen the model being rewarded were more aggressive to the doll afterwards, whilst the group which saw the adult being punished were less aggressive. It can thus be surmised that all the children had learnt the aggressive response through modelling, however, negative reinforcement inhibited children from imitating the behaviour they had learnt through observation or social learning. Aggressive acts are also most often modelled by three principal sources, namely the family, the environment and the media (Bandura, 1971: 5; Louw & Edwards, 2004: 267; Siegel, 2004: 156).

2.5.2.1. The family

Siegel (2004: 156) notes that children who tend to act aggressively usually have parents which also use violence or aggression when interacting with others, when resolving disputes, or when achieving goals. In this regard, certain socio-criminogenic risk factors within the family may play a considerable role in the susceptibility for youth to come into conflict with the law. Children reared by parents who approve of violence or deviance may learn to model the behaviour they observe during their interactions with parents. Children may perhaps see parents being rewarded for violence or misconduct and learn that they too would be rewarded for acting in a similar fashion. They may also observe parents transgressing the law when resolving disputes or achieving goals and learn to mimic this observed behaviour when they are in similar situations. The same can be said when adolescents are victims of abuse within the family. Violence may then be seen as a norm, and thus as an acceptable way of behaving in certain situations.

In terms of reinforcement, parents who are in conflict with the law themselves, may be less likely to punish children who engage in socially unacceptable behaviour. This absence of negative reinforcement following antisocial acts may then be seen as acceptable by children, and form part of their socialisation process, thereby increasing their risk of misbehaving. The socialisation process would also be negatively affected even if children are punished, due to the differential reinforcement as a result of the parents engaging in antisocial acts themselves, but punishing children for engaging in the very same acts. Poverty may also be a crucial risk factor with regards to the family,

as parents may engage in economic crimes as a means of survival. Children observing their parents satisfying a need (e.g. hunger) through offending, may then model this behaviour when confronted by similar needs, thus increasing their probability of coming into conflict with the law.

2.5.2.2. The environment

The environment or community is also a principal source of learning. Children who reside in communities with high rates of crime or gang activities, or communities where adults are positively orientated towards crime, may also be at risk of modelling the inappropriate behaviour observed from adults. They may view community members transgressing or using violence to obtain status, reach their goals or earn a living, and start imitating this behaviour as it would be linked to positive reinforcement (i.e. the benefits gained from transgressing). In contrast, youth would learn acceptable behaviour when residing in low crime-rate communities as they would model the pro-social behaviour observed from conventional adults. These communities may also more readily discipline youth for engaging in socially unacceptable behaviour, thereby reinforcing more positive behavioural traits (Siegel, 2004: 156).

2.5.2.3. The media

Films and television shows also often graphically depict individuals being rewarded for their use of violence, or may depict individual's gaining financial success through contravention of the law. Furthermore, violence is often portrayed as acceptable behaviour, especially for heroes who never have to face the legal consequences for their actions (Siegel, 2004: 156). Youth could therefore be at risk of modelling this behaviour, as it could form part of their learning/socialisation process. They could therefore, mimic the unlawful/violent behaviour seen on television or on the internet as a means of gaining social rewards, status or financial success. Youth who are regularly exposed to media violence may also become desensitised to aggression or other socially unacceptable behaviour patterns, especially if parents fail to monitor the programmes viewed by their children, or provide parental guidance as required.

2.5.3. Evaluation of the theory

According to Louw, et. al. (2005: 60), the Social Learning perspective proposes that nearly all behaviour is learnt, with particular theories emphasising a few straightforward ways of learning such as mimicking the behaviour observed in one's family and community. Subsequently, the learning perspective could easily be regarded as too one-dimensional. However, this viewpoint would be unjustified as learning theorists apply strict scientific rules when studying the phenomenon of social learning (Louw, et. al., 2005: 61). It should also be noted that even though specific ways of learning (such as classical and operant conditioning, and observational learning) are emphasised, other ways of learning such as cognitive learning or learning by insight, are by no means excluded from the learning perspective.

In relation to socio-criminogenic risk factors, the Social Learning perspective can also be seen as an important tool with which to explain the influence of exposure to certain risk factors such as abuse within the family, deviant peer group association, gang membership or residing in 'high crime-rate' communities. Youth could therefore learn to resort to unlawful or violent behaviour as a means with which to resolve disputes (when subjected to abuse within the family), to achieve status (when observing gang members being praised for their use of violence/aggression), or to achieve social goals (when seeing peers or members of the community being rewarded for unlawful acts).

Additionally, youth could also become desensitised to acts of violence, aggression and unlawful behaviour when they observe or experience it regularly in their families, communities, peer groups or schools. As such, it could form part of their socialisation process, increasing their risk of resorting to violence, aggression or lawlessness as a means with which to obtain social rewards, gain status or resolve disputes, as they would have regularly witnessed other individuals benefitting from unacceptable behaviour. They could perhaps also have learnt specific skills or techniques to contravene the law through observing other persons contravening the law successfully.

It should however, be noted that no single theoretical perspective succeeds in adequately explaining criminal involvement. In this regard, integrated theoretical models prove more useful in elucidating how and why individuals engage in

transgressions. Thus the integrated approach of Elliot, Ageton and Canter (1979) is discussed in the succeeding section.

2.6. Delbert Elliott, Suzanne Ageton and Rachelle Canter's Integrated Social Process Theory (1979)

Elliott, Ageton and Canter (1979: 3) propose an integrated theoretical model which synthesises the Strain, Social Control and Social Learning perspectives discussed in this chapter, into a single paradigm which attempts to explain the phenomenon of youth misconduct. This model avoids the class bias intrinsic in the traditional strain perspectives (see sections 2.2.3. and 2.3.3.) and highlight two causal pathways to sustained patterns of youth misconduct. The primary variables in this model include two elements of the social bond as identified by Travis Hirschi (1969), namely involvement and commitment; attenuation experiences such as failure in conventional social settings as highlighted by Robert Merton (1938) and Richard Cloward and Lloyd Ohlin (1960) respectively; and social learning as proposed by Albert Bandura (1971).

Subsequently, Elliott, et. al. (1979: 3) focus on two dominant pathways to youth misconduct. The first pathway is exemplified by weak integration into, and commitment to societal norms and values, together with the involvement in antisocial peer groups or youth gang subcultures. The second pathway is based on having initially strong bonds to the social order, the subsequent weakening of these bonds, and the exposure and commitment to antisocial peer groups or youth gang subcultures. This model also assumes that adolescents have differing early socialisation experiences which could lead to varying degrees of commitment and integration into conventional social groupings.

Based on this notion, the relationship between the inability to achieve socially approved goals, and subsequent misconduct is therefore related to the strength of the initial bond to the social order. In addition, restricted access to the resources needed to achieve social goals also constitute a source of strain, and hence serve as further motivation as to why youth may come into conflict with the law (Elliott, et. al., 1979: 9).

It should also be noted that limited access to the socially acceptable means with which to achieve conventional goals are not the only factors which may weaken or break initially strong ties to the social order, as the experience of being arrested and labelled a 'delinquent' may also initiate social processes which often restrict an individual's

access to conformist social roles which may isolate one from participating in socially approved activities, or that may lead to contravening the law (see section 1.2.2.).

Furthermore, Elliott, et. al. (1979: 11) assert that certain socio-criminogenic risk factors such as social disorganisation, family conflict and interpersonal violence, poverty, and unemployment; may also weaken or break one's bond to the social order. Therefore, it can be surmised that the integrated social process theory postulates that limited opportunities, the failure to achieve conventional goals, negative labelling experiences and risks related to the family and community environments, may all weaken an individual's bond with the social order and may thus be causal factors leading to misconduct (Elliott, et. al., 1979: 11).

The aforementioned pathways are illustrated in Figure 3 below:

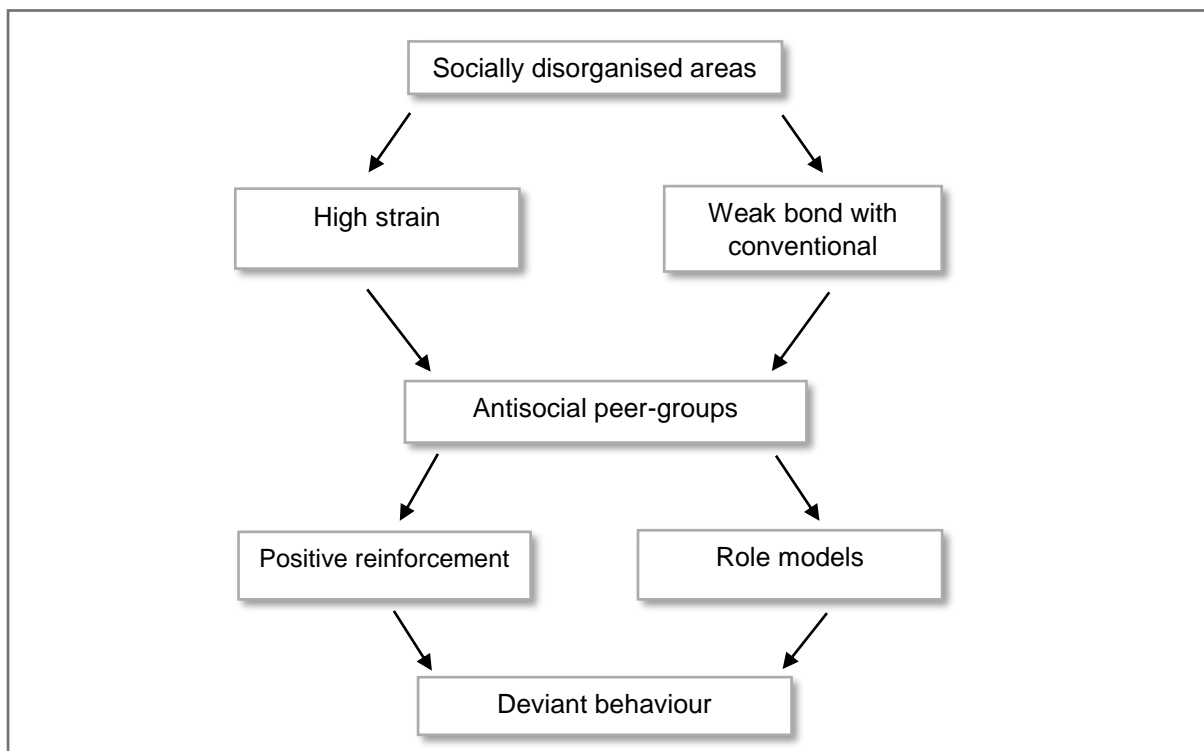


Figure 3: *Elliott, Ageton and Canter's Integrated Social Process Theory* (Adapted from Elliott, et. al., 1979: 10; Bartollas & Schmalleger, 2013: 63).

As indicated in Figure 3, it is apparent that residing in a socially disorganised community characterised by high levels of population mobility, gang activity, economic depression and unemployment may lead youth to develop weak bonds with conventional social groups, prosocial activities and societal norms. Furthermore, high levels of strain due to being exposed to various socio-criminogenic risk factors such

as antisocial parents, abusive parents, neglect within the family, academic failure, antisocial peers, academic failure, weak levels of attachment to school, or residing in 'high crime-rate' areas; in addition to the presence of weak social bonds may motivate youth to seek out deviant peer groups who provide both positive reinforcement for unlawful behaviour, as well as function as role models from which to learn socially unacceptable behaviour. Consequently, adolescents may be more susceptible to come into conflict with the law, when a high level of bonding to deviant subcultures is combined with low levels of bonding to conventional or prosocial social groups (Bartollas & Schmalleger, 2013: 63; Elliott, et. al., 1979: 17).

2.7. Conclusion

Within any context, youth misconduct is a multifaceted social phenomenon with an array of aspects to be evaluated in the explanation thereof. In consideration of the information presented in this chapter; strain, social learning and low levels of social bonding in relation to the increased risk for youth to come into conflict with the law, should become apparent. Numerous socio-criminogenic risk factors connected to the social status of youth (such as economic inequality, relative deprivation and restricted access to the opportunities and resources needed to achieve social goals); their level of bonding to society (such as weak parental attachment, weak attachment to school, low levels of commitment to conventional groups or goals, inadequate involvement in pro-social activities and attachment to deviant subcultures); as well as negative social learning experiences, may all be regarded as causal pathways to youth misconduct. It is therefore, essential to explore the value of the Strain, Social Control and Social Learning perspectives in research, to acquire an appreciation of the current application and subsequent comprehension of these theoretical perspectives on the behaviour of youth in conflict with the law.

CHAPTER 3: EMPIRICAL PERSPECTIVE

With an understanding of the theoretical perspectives provided in the preceding chapter, it becomes necessary to present an empirical perspective on socio-criminogenic risk factors in order to demonstrate and analyse previous research related to the aims of this study (see section 1.6.). The purpose of this chapter is therefore to provide an overview of the available and relevant literature with regard to the prospective socio-criminogenic risk factors which can be identified as components that may contribute to youth misconduct, and which marginalise adolescents from mainstream society.

3.1. Introduction

The crime phenomenon has been widely explored and a number of advances related to understanding youth misconduct in particular, have been made. Youth who are frequently exposed to adverse factors in their lives are often placed on the peripheries of society and referred to as 'high risk' youth, as they are generally believed to experience multiple challenges. These youth are typically reared in economically stressed families or communities; usually with histories of abuse, neglect or sexual victimisation; often have deficits related to educational and vocational skills; and are susceptible to become involved in substance abuse and other forms of behavioural misconduct. The greater the exposure to these challenges or criminogenic risk factors, the more likely it is that youth will become involved in socially undesirable behaviours, including law violations (see section 1.2.4.4.).

Criminogenic risk factors, and in particular behaviours such as illicit substance abuse, academic failure and sexual promiscuity are also interrelated as involvement in one type of problem behaviour is generally indicative of some participation in other socially undesirable behaviours (Bartollas & Schmalleger, 2013: 5). Siegel (2002: 4) as well as Van der Merwe and Dawes (2007: 100) concur, and highlight various socio-criminogenic risk factors within the context of the family, school and community which place a significant number of youth at risk of coming into conflict with the law. These factors include poverty, unemployment, structurally non-intact families, social disorganisation, positively orientated civic values regarding criminality and inadequate educational attainment. Furthermore, Siegel (2002: 112) highlights three distinct pathways to youth misconduct, namely: a) the authority-conflict pathway, b) the covert

pathway and c) the overt pathway. These pathways may lead youth to come into conflict with the law and are discussed in the succeeding section.

3.2. Pathways to youth misconduct

Developmental theorists acknowledge numerous pathways to misconduct when adolescents are exposed to socio-criminogenic risk factors. Some youth may begin transgressing early in life, whilst others may transgress at a later developmental stage. Certain youth may engage in violence and extortion, some may be involved in theft and fraud, and others may participate in a variety of law contraventions such as shoplifting, burglary or sexual transgressions. Using data from a longitudinal cohort study conducted in Pittsburgh, Siegel (2002: 113) identifies three distinct pathways to youth misconduct, as mentioned in the foregoing section. These pathways are illustrated in Figure 4 below:

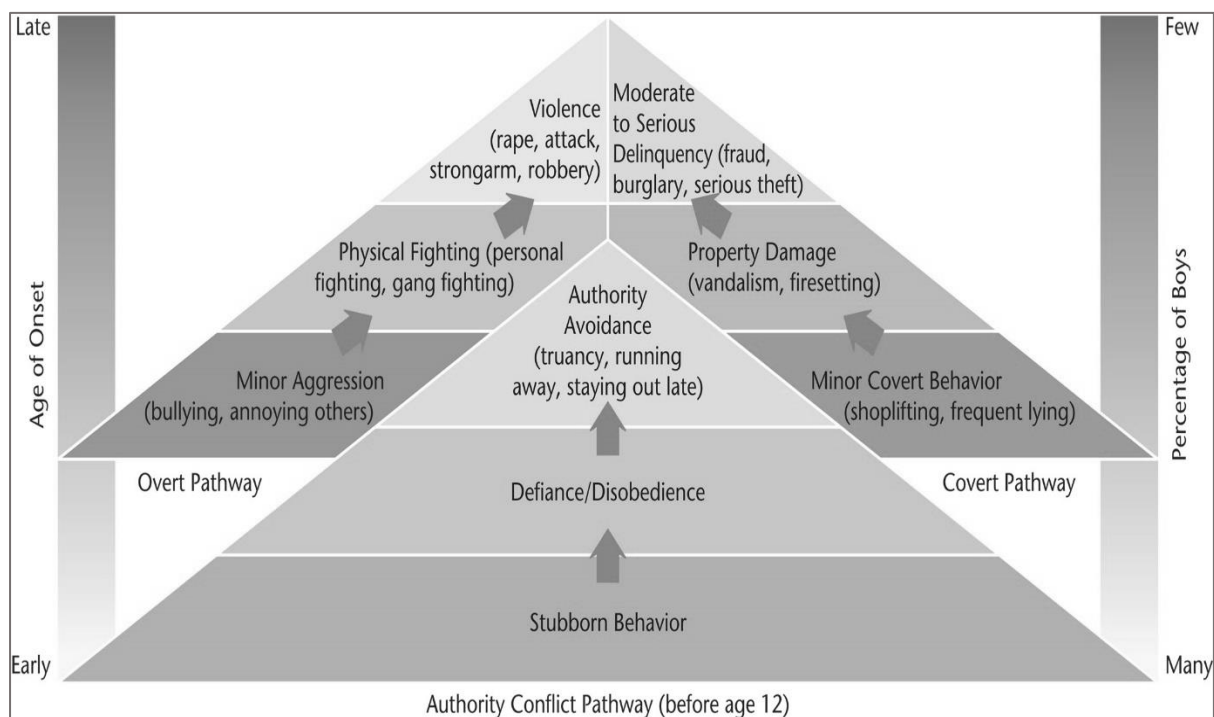


Figure 4: *Pathways to youth misconduct* (Siegel, 2002: 113).

The authority-conflict pathway begins early in life, usually before 12 years of age. It starts with stubborn behaviour which leads to defiance and disobedience, and ultimately, to authority avoidance which may manifest in truancy, running away from home or staying out past curfews (Siegel, 2002: 113). This pathway may be compounded by exposure to certain socio-criminogenic risk factors, particularly those pertaining to the family context, as factors such as weak parental attachment or

suffering abuse within the family may cause youth to become more resistant and defiant of the rules set by parents or caregivers, subsequently leading to more frequent and more severe forms of disobedience, which could make adolescents more susceptible to come into conflict with the law (Siegel, 2002: 113). Youth who engage in authority avoidance by running away from home or by becoming truant are also at an increased risk of transgressing as they may have more free time and energy available to engage in misconduct, will lack parental supervision and may transgress as a means of survival (also see sections 2.4.2.3. and 2.3.3.).

Another route to youth misconduct, the covert pathway, usually occurs between the ages of 12 and 15 years, and starts with less serious forms of deviance such as dishonesty or shoplifting. If left unmanaged, these subtle forms of deceit may later lead to acts of vandalism, and could eventually escalate to more serious transgressions such as fraud, burglary, theft or narcotics-related contraventions as youth would learn to associate maladaptive behaviour with social rewards as opposed to chastisement (Siegel, 2002: 113).

The third avenue, the overt pathway, begins with aggressive behaviours such as bullying, and might lead to more severe forms of violence such as assault. It could be argued that youth who transgress as a result of the covert or overt pathway may be exposed to a number of socio-criminogenic risk factors within the domains of the family, school, peer group or community, subsequently making them more susceptible to initially engage in more subtle forms of deviance such as shoplifting; and if left untreated, to engage in more severe transgressions such as sexual or violent offences (Siegel, 2002: 113).

3.3. Socio-criminogenic risk factors

Similar to the pathways discussed in the preceding section, socio-criminogenic risk factors may also be regarded as avenues to antisocial or law-violating behaviour, as these factors refer to specific conditions within one's environment which may increase the risk of coming into conflict with the law. Simões, Matos and Batista-Foguet (2008: 390) concur and note several social risk factors related to unlawful behaviour. These factors include: i) familial and peer relationships with a specific focus on socialisation processes, ii) socio-economic challenges and social disorganisation within communities and iii) situational factors which provide illegitimate avenues to success

such as gang membership or residing in high crime-rate communities. However, socio-criminogenic risk factors are wide-ranging and this is by no means an exhaustive list. An exposition of the most common socio-criminogenic risk factors based on risk factor research is therefore provided in the succeeding sections.

3.3.1. Socio-criminogenic risk factors within the family context

The family is typically viewed as the first institution with which a child interacts and is generally regarded as a primary socialisation agent tasked with the role of teaching prosocial behaviour and keeping the behaviour of young persons in line with socially acceptable norms, values and rules. However, the family environment is also significantly positively correlated with youth misconduct, as the absence of these fundamental functions place youth at tremendous risk of coming into conflict with the law (Bezuidenhout, 2013: 75; Ntshangase, 2015: 38; Siegel, 2002: 158). As such, families are commonly accepted as one of the key factors influencing youth misconduct as disruptions or changes within the family may have long-lasting consequences on the attitudes and behaviour of children (Earnest, 2003: 2; Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990: 97).

Families which are disrupted as a result of spousal or interpersonal conflict, negligent parents who are not attuned to their child's behaviour or emotional state, and parental deviance are all factors which have the potential to promote youth misconduct. The importance of the family in understanding why youth come into conflict with the law can also be seen in the fact that various theories pertaining to youth misconduct focus specifically on the parent-child relationship (see sections 2.4.2.1. and 2.5.2.1.). Bartollas and Schmallegger (2013: 103) concur and note that "Social Disorganisation theories, Subcultural theories, Social Control theories, and Life-course theories all have this emphasis".

Qualitative data on the risk factors associated with youth misconduct, obtained from in-depth, semi-structured interviews with a sample of 20 detained youth, also emphasise the family as a major contributor to delinquency. The majority of participants in the sample depicted homes in their communities as chaotic, unstructured environments, characterised by parental neglect, absent parents and financial difficulties (Barnert, Perry, Azzi, Shetgiri, Ryan, Dudovitz, Zima & Chung, 2015: 1365). Conditions within the family are therefore crucial factors to consider with

regard to understanding the nature and aetiology of youth misconduct. Hence, the following socio-criminogenic risk factors within the domain of the family will be discussed: i) economically disadvantaged households, ii) parental and sibling deviance, iii) structurally non-intact families, iv) family conflict and interpersonal violence and v) poor parental supervision.

3.3.1.1. Economically disadvantaged households

Bartol and Bartol (2017: 54) highlight the challenge concomitant to the discussion of poverty as a socio-criminogenic risk factor, as impoverished individuals too often bear the burden of society's misfortunes. Yet, the correlation between economic strain and the ensuing risk to transgress, is too robust to overlook. In this regard, 'poverty' entails a lack of basic resources needed to sustain an average standard of living and typically includes "the absence of sufficient income to meet basic necessities of life" (Bartol & Bartol, 2017: 54). The adverse effects of poverty on childhood development and behaviour, even into adulthood, are thus apparent.

Accordingly, Gaik, et. al. (2010: 385); Lipsey and Derzon (1998); and Van Steden, Boutellier, Scholte and Heijnen (2012: 56), stress poverty and unemployment within the family context as a major predictor for youth misconduct. Arthur (2007: 25) substantiates this by asserting that both official crime statistics and longitudinal studies indicate that children from impoverished families are at heightened risk of coming into conflict with the law in comparison to children less affected by poverty. Case (2017: 510) also emphasises the interrelatedness between problematic behaviours such as truancy, substance abuse and assault; and living in poverty.

However, in this regard it is important to note that neither poverty nor unemployment *per se* should be regarded as a risk factor, but rather the challenges associated with financial hardship, as impoverished households are commonly characterised by stress, frustration, aggression or hostility (Bartol & Bartol, 2017: 54; Burton, 2007: 21; Gaik, et. al., 2010: 385; Teeters & Reinemann, 1950: 127). Subsequently, youth raised under these conditions become symptom-bearers of adversity, as parental stress and frustration may negatively impact the parent-child relationship, and consequently be detrimental to the child's socialisation process.

Caregivers may spend the majority of their time seeking employment, thereby compromising the level of attachment between parent and child (see section 2.4.2.1.). Parents may also become so frustrated with their economic position that they become physically or verbally abusive toward their offspring (see section 2.5.2.1.). In both instances, youth are placed at an increased risk for misconduct as poor parental attachment diminishes the child's stake in conformity and increases the risk of norm violations, either as a means with which to gain attention or due to a lack of socialisation brought about by spending minimal amounts of time with parents. Parental stress and frustration associated with unemployment may also lead to children falling prey to verbal or physical abuse.

This may, in turn, result in children modelling or mimicking violent and aggressive behaviour themselves, or may lead to the child fleeing their home in an attempt to escape the abusive environment. Once homeless and destitute, these youth may engage in shoplifting or sex work as a means of survival. This could also be accompanied by the use of illicit substances as a mechanism for dealing with the effects of abuse, further increasing their risk of transgressing as substance use lowers inhibitions, promotes aggression and hostility, and can be associated with 'high-risk' or 'sensation-seeking' behaviour (Bartollas & Schmalleger, 2013: 63; Najman, Clavarino, McGee, Bor, Williams & Hayatbakhsh, 2010: 538; Rekker, Pardini, Keijsers, Branje, Loeber & Meeus, 2015: 2).

Hay, Fortson, Hollist, Altheimer and Schaible (2007: 593) concur and add that the impact of family poverty on youth misconduct may also be substantially dependent upon the level of poverty in the community in which the family resides. By drawing from several poverty-oriented theoretical perspectives related to youth misconduct, and using data from the National Survey of Children (NSC); Hay, et. al. (2007: 593) examined the hypothesis that poverty within the community augments the effects of poverty within the family. The NSC is a three-wave panel survey conducted on youth between the ages of 7 and 16 years, who were regarded as being at 'high-risk' for contravening the law.

In this regard, support was found to corroborate the notion that family poverty considerably influences the rate of youth transgressions, particularly in instances where economically disadvantaged families resided in impoverished communities. Hay, et. al. (2007: 596) further support their argument by noting that "family poverty

places a child at risk for delinquency because of its effects on a family's ability to socialise children to succeed in school. Children unable to live up to the 'middle-class measuring rod' of the school would become frustrated by their status and would resort to delinquency".

Furthermore, the risk for misconduct is compounded when impoverished youth come into contact with other economically disadvantaged youth in their community who experience similar levels of frustration as a result of their lesser status, as "high community poverty produces the critical mass of disadvantage that in turn produces the delinquent subcultures that encourage delinquency" (Hay, et. al., 2007: 596). Subsequently, economically deprived youth residing in economically deprived areas are exposed to 'reference groups' within which antisocial values are already established. Deviance therefore becomes a collective solution as opposed to what might have initially been experienced as an individual problem, often increasing the risk of norm violations for the youth in question (also see section 2.3.2.).

A separate study was conducted by Khan and Singh (2014), who assessed the psycho-socio and criminogenic factors which led to the unlawful conduct of a group of South African youth. Their data was gathered from personally administered questionnaires with 77 male youth between the ages of 17 and 31 years, who were detained at the Westville Youth Correctional Facility in Durban, Kwa-Zulu Natal. Khan and Singh (2014: 112) identified several prominent socio-criminogenic risk factors which contributed to the unlawful behaviour of the respondents in their sample, which included academic failure and dropping out of school, prior exposure to crime and the socio-economic status of the participants.

Based on their research, "the financial position of youth in conflict with the law is further exacerbated by significant levels of poverty at the household level" as the majority of respondents (74.4%) reportedly engaged in law-violating behaviour due to their exclusion from the labour market, while 27% stated that no adult members of their household were employed during the time they committed their offences (Khan & Singh, 2014: 112). Furthermore, poverty and unemployment featured as significant sociological factors perpetuating aggression and unlawful behaviour amongst youth. This, in turn, could have an intermittent effect on academic performance, which may translate into poorly acquired skills restricting one's access to the rapidly shrinking labour market. With reference to this limitation, the limited number of legitimate

opportunities available to youth increase their risk to transgress, as it may result in the participation in illegitimate opportunity structures to reach social goals or to gain status (see section 2.3.2.).

Rekker, et. al. (2015: 2) concur with the findings of both Hay, et. al. (2007) and Khan and Singh (2014); and reaffirm the notion that youth from low-income families are more likely to engage in transgressions as they may lack the legitimate means to attain their desired social or economic goals. Hence, in terms of future prospects and quality of life, youth from low-income families often have more to gain than to lose from transgressing, as law-violating behaviour is sometimes regarded as an 'easy' or even 'acceptable' mechanism for survival when confronted by economic hardship and unemployment.

Rekker, et. al. (2015: 2) also confirm the association between the economic status of the family and community respectively, and note that low-income families often also reside in impoverished and unstable neighbourhoods which may advance offending due to a lack of social capital and collective supervision. Children who are reared in economically disadvantaged families, particularly those who also reside in communities where poverty is rife, are thus at an increased risk for misconduct as a higher probability exists that these adolescents will experience restricted access to educational resources and adequate schooling (McLoughlin, Rucklidge, Grace & McLean, 2010: 701).

Although information concerning the age at which family poverty has the greatest impact on the behaviour of children is limited, different studies have identified childhood and adolescence as the most significant periods. Najman, et. al. (2010: 539) conducted one such study by using data obtained from a large-scale, population-based birth cohort study in Brisbane, Australia. Experiences related to poverty were measured during pregnancy, at six months, at five years and at 14 years after birth. Najman, et. al. (2010: 539) noted a correlation between poverty and aggressive or deviant behaviour from as early as four years of age.

Jarjoura, Triplett and Brinker (2002: 159) agree with the findings of Najman, et. al. (2010) and state that "living in a poor family during the first five years of life is related to an increased likelihood of delinquent behaviour in adolescence". Experiences related to family poverty during the early life course, may therefore predict aggressive

and deviant behaviour later in life. However, family poverty experienced during the adolescent period has the “strongest” and “most consistent” independent association with aggressive and illicit behaviour (Najman, et. al., 2010: 542). Youth reared in economically disadvantaged families where their basic needs are not adequately fulfilled, are thus less likely to avoid coming into conflict with the law. Apart from investing vast amounts of time seeking employment, parents facing economic hardship may also become so frustrated with their financial position that they could engage in harsh or lax disciplinary practices. Whilst harsh parenting styles could lead to adolescents becoming desensitised to acts of violence or aggression and as a result imitating these behaviours, lax disciplinary practices may lead to inadequate supervision, subsequently jeopardising the socialisation process and increasing a child’s risk to transgress.

When families are unable to provide for the materialistic needs of their offspring, youth may also endeavour to meet their needs outside of the home. In this regard, the family may lose control over the behaviour of children, or experience difficulties when attempting to reprimand or discipline children when their behaviour needs modification (Bartol & Bartol, 2017: 55; Trojanowicz, 1973: 77). The experience of poverty can also encompass several poverty co-factors including substandard education, parental dissonance, parental or sibling deviance, poor parental supervision and separation or divorce (Bartol & Bartol, 2017: 51). The aforementioned socio-criminogenic risk factors are discussed in the succeeding sections of this chapter.

3.3.1.2. Parental deviance

Parental deviance may also significantly increase the risk for young persons to transgress, as antisocial adults are more likely to have children who exhibit maladaptive behaviour patterns (Burton, 2007: 20). Families characterised by violent or hostile parenting styles, excessive gambling and vulgar language may result in children emulating these behaviours and using it in other contexts (Ntshangase, 2015: 39). The research of Mhlongo (2005: 38) affirms this and further notes that family members often mimic one another’s disruptive behaviour, with adolescents being susceptible to misbehave if influenced by older siblings or family members, especially when misconduct is coupled with social rewards (Craine, Tanaka, Nishima & Conger, 2009: 436; Ntshangase, 2015: 39).

Youth raised by caregivers who transgress, thus have an increased risk of coming into conflict with the law as criminality and violence could arguably be experienced as 'common' or 'normal' behaviour when dealing with strain, attempting to reach goals, or when resolving disputes (Bezuidenhout, 2013: 77). There is also overwhelming evidence corroborating the notion that parent/sibling criminality has a harrowing effect on the subsequent behaviour of youth. Maguin, Hawkins, Catalano, Hill, Abbott and Herrenkohl (1995) propose that children under 10 years, who have parents that are tolerant of violence, are more likely to exhibit violent behaviour by the age of 18 years. Hawkins, et. al. (2000: 3) found that males between 18 and 23 years of age, who have fathers who engage in law-violating behaviour, are 3.8 times more likely to perpetrate violent transgressions in comparison to males with non-criminal fathers.

Arthur (2007: 21) studied the behaviour of 102 males, whom all had a convicted father. Of these, 51% of the participants had come into conflict with the law themselves, in comparison to 23.8% of participants in the sample who were reared by non-criminal fathers. Based on these findings, Arthur (2007: 21) affirms that the "best predictor" of youth misconduct is having a parent convicted of an offence before the child reaches 10 years of age. Similarly, in a longitudinal study conducted as part of the Cambridge Youth Survey, Donal West and David Farrington (in Siegel, 2004: 148) tracked 1000 male participants from the age of eight years, and found that 37% of youth with convicted fathers had transgressed themselves compared to only 8.4% of youth with non-delinquent fathers.

The detrimental effect of parent and sibling criminality on the subsequent maladaptive behaviour of youth, is also confirmed by the research findings of Farrington, Barnes and Lambert (1996), who evaluated the frequency of convictions among males with convicted family members in comparison to males with family members who had never been convicted of an offence. The research findings indicated that 53% of participants in the sample who had convicted family members transgressed, in comparison to 24% of participants with family members who had never been convicted of an offence. Howitt (2015: 75) supports the research findings of Farrington, et. al. (1996) and notes that "most family relationships show this trend – father, mother, older brother, younger brother, and older sister".

Moreover, Howitt (2015: 75) offers several potential explanations for the aforementioned family linkages in criminality, which include:

- I. A genetic mechanism which could possibly result in the hereditary transmission of a predisposition to criminality such as Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD).
- II. Children could directly or indirectly be guided to act unlawfully by their parents.
- III. Parents and their offspring may share common environmental risk factors such as low socio-economic status or residing in a disorganised neighbourhood.
- IV. Parents and their offspring may share the same multiple risk factors.
- V. The criminal justice system may be biased against the parents, and by association also against their offspring due to factors such as race, economic status or position in the social structure.

Putkonen, Ryyänänen, Eronen and Tiihonen (in Howitt, 2015: 75) further demonstrated the family linkages in criminality by focusing on the intergenerational factors for repeat homicide offenders. They analysed the behaviour of a sample of 35 males convicted in Finland between 1981 and 1993, by examining the criminal and detention records of their parents compared to those of a matched control group. The results obtained suggested that the probability of engaging in any type of misconduct was five times greater for the parents of the experimental group (parent generation) than for their counterparts in the control group, while the prevalence of being convicted for any crime was 13% (parent generation) compared to only 3% for the control group. With regard to the participants themselves (offspring generation), the experimental group exhibited a 36% prevalence for being convicted of a crime, compared to only 3% for the participants in the control group. Furthermore, the probability of violent misconduct was significantly higher for the offspring generation, while it had not been similar for the parent generation. The existence of an 'intergenerational transmission' of law-violating behaviour could thus be argued on the basis of these findings, and motivated by the social learning processes inherent in parent-child relationships (Howitt, 2015: 75).

As discussed in the previous chapter (see section 2.5.2.), the Social Learning perspective proposes that law-violating behaviour can be acquired by youth who model and imitate the behaviour displayed by deviant adults/siblings whom are often viewed as role models. Youth may thus be more likely to transgress themselves,

should they witness family members coming into conflict with the law. The particular form which the maladaptive behaviour takes, the frequency and situation in which it is displayed and the specific individuals who are targeted, are also determined by social learning (Siegel, 2004: 156). The said correlations therefore seem to be more social than hereditary in nature.

When parents or siblings engage in law-violating behaviour, adolescents are socialised to view crime as an acceptable way of behaving or achieving one's social goals. Adolescents may also witness parents/siblings gaining rewards when contravening the law, which could arguably reinforce their tendency to transgress as well, as they may learn to associate criminality with some specific reward or positive outcome. Aggression and violence may also form part of the socialisation process when witnessed or experienced within the family context and subsequently, may also increase the risk of transgressing. Violence and abuse within the family context is therefore discussed in the subsequent section.

3.3.1.3. Family conflict and interpersonal violence

Child abuse and neglect often occur in both international and domestic contexts, and may have a significant impact on the behaviour and attitude of victims during both the adolescent- and adult-phases of lifespan development (Bartollas & Schmallegger, 2013: 107). Although the terms 'abuse' and 'neglect' are sometimes used synonymously, a clear distinction between these terms exist. Abuse refers to the deliberate causing of harm to a child, while neglect often denotes an omission to act, which results in accidental injury or harm (Wallace, 1998: 169). Despite this distinction, maltreatment in either form has become a priority for criminal justice officials and has a profound influence on victims, specifically with regard to their subsequent risk of transgressing as will be indicated below (Bartollas & Schmallegger, 2013: 107; Siegel, 2002: 166).

According to the National Centre of Child Abuse and Neglect, there has been a dramatic increase in the number of reported cases over the last 15 years, with a significant number of youth being exposed to violence as direct victims, and a large segment of the youth populace witnessing acts of violence and aggression perpetrated against others (Stouthamer-Loeber, Wei, Homish & Loeber, 2002: 261). Statistics obtained from the United States Department of Health and Human Services (2009),

indicate that approximately 3 million cases of child abuse and neglect are reported annually, while a South African study conducted in the Western Cape in 2005, showed that 4 358 (0.3%) youth experienced abuse or neglect (Burton, 2007: 19).

Data obtained from *Childline South Africa* also indicated that 3 428 calls relating to reports of physical abuse were received in 2008, compared to 1 775 in 2006, and 2 538 in 2007 (Clark, 2012: 83). From the statistics obtained in 2008, it can be surmised that 53.4% of the reported cases were related to experiences of direct victimisation, while 11.1% were related to witnessing acts of violence against others. More recent statistics obtained from the *Childline South Africa 2015/2016 Annual Report*, indicates a substantial increase in the number of reported abuse cases, with 15 954 cases being reported in the 2014/2015 financial year and 20 232 cases in the 2015/2016 financial year (Childline South Africa, 2016).

Aside from the direct, immediate harm associated with being abused, the long-term effects of child maltreatment not only impacts on future behaviour and societal interactions, but are also strongly correlated with youth misconduct (Stouthamer-Loeber, et. al., 2002: 262). In this regard, Cathy Spatz-Widom (1989: 162) conducted a pioneering study in which she compared the behaviour of 908 abused and neglected youth with 667 non-abused youth. The data indicated that 26% of the participants who suffered abuse or neglect had been arrested as juveniles (in comparison to 17% of the control group), and that 29% (compared to 21% of the control group) had criminal records as adults.

Spatz-Widom (1989: 162) also found that victimised youth become accustomed to violence and aggression when witnessed or experienced at regular intervals, as this may form part of the social learning process discussed earlier. Maladaptive behavioural traits can thus be learnt within the family context and passed on between generations, a process which Spatz-Widom (1989) identified as the 'cycle of violence'. Youth who witness or suffer abuse, may therefore become desensitised and to an extent 'normalise' violent and aggressive behaviour, utilising it as a means with which to achieve social goals or resolve disputes.

Bartollas and Schmalleger (2013: 107) support Spatz-Widom's (1989) findings and note that abuse and neglect increases the probability of arrest as an adolescent by approximately 59%, and as an adult by almost 29%. Additionally, research findings suggest that abused youth are younger at the time of first arrest, commit nearly double

the amount of transgressions, are arrested more often and are more likely to perpetrate violent transgressions (Bartollas & Schmallegger, 2013: 107; Bender, 2010: 466). Further evidence corroborating that experiences of direct or indirect abuse may drastically increase one's risk of transgressing, lie in the findings of the Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention's (CJCP) 2008 National Youth Lifestyle Survey, which involved interviews with 4 391 participants aged 12 to 22 years. Data obtained from this survey suggests that youth who witness family members intentionally hurting one another are 2 – 8 times more likely to be in possession of a weapon, 2.1 times more likely to engage in physical altercations and 4.4 times more likely to threaten or injure someone with a weapon in comparison to youth who have not been exposed to violence in the family context (Clark, 2012: 83).

Apart from being at an increased risk of coming into conflict with the law, victims or witnesses of abuse or violence, also experience various psychological and behavioural challenges including antisocial and hostile conduct, mental and physical disabilities, emotional and social drawbacks, and learning difficulties (Bender, 2010: 466; Ford, 2002: 26; Weiler & Widom, 1996: 262). More specifically, child maltreatment may affect the emotional development of the child; may lead to truancy and disorderly behaviour at school; running away from home; or may cause self-rejection to the effect that victims often engage in destructive activities such as sex work or acts of violence (Bartollas & Schmallegger, 2013: 111). Hence, it could be argued that youth who fall victim to abuse have a greater probability to transgress as violence could form part of their social learning experiences, affect their level of moral reasoning or influence their self-concept. More so, when accompanied by the aforementioned challenges related to suffering abuse.

Children who have been mistreated may also experience depression or Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), which could lead to the development of psychopathic symptoms such as exhibiting a lack of empathy, superficial charm, chronic lying or deceit; most of which may increase their risk of engaging in law-violating behaviour (Bender, 2010: 468). Evidence to support this claim, lie in the findings of Teplin, Abram, McClelland, Dulcan and Mericle (2002: 1133), who conducted research involving 1 829 (1 172 males and 657 females) arrested and detained youth. The data obtained suggests that close to two-thirds (66.6%) of the male participants and approximately three quarters (75%) of the female participants

met the criteria for one or more psychiatric disorders. Some of the disorders the participants presented with include major depressive episodes, dysthymia, manic episodes, psychotic disorders, anxiety or panic disorders, and substance abuse (Teplin, et. al., 2002: 1137).

A study conducted by Dodge (in Ford, 2002: 41) also identified a link between being abused; difficulties with social information processing; and displaying aggression. Victims of abuse are thus more likely to act violently, expect people to be hostile, and view aggression in a positive light. It could, therefore, be argued that individuals who are victims of abuse are at an increased risk of coming into conflict with the law, as they are more likely to believe that distrust and antisocial behaviour are needed to protect oneself; often perceive people as being more hostile than what they actually present as; and view aggression as an acceptable form of behaviour with which to resolve disputes.

Siegel (2002: 178) concurs, and states “psychologists suggest that maltreatment encourages children to use aggression as a means of solving problems and prevents them from feeling empathy for others. It diminishes their ability to cope with stress and makes them vulnerable to the violence in the culture”. Some maltreated youth may also relieve hostility toward their parents by exhibiting further socio-criminogenic risk factors such as performing poorly at school, abusing substances or joining gangs. These factors are discussed in subsequent sections of this chapter.

3.3.1.4. Structurally non-intact families

As noted earlier in this chapter, the family is often viewed as the most important institution governing the socialisation of youth. The family is also influential in developing morals and civic values, which regulate behaviour throughout an individuals’ lifecycle. Owing to the nature and role fulfilled by the family unit in this regard, it is only natural that the family has long been identified in the literature as a pertinent factor in determining an adolescent’s risk to transgress. Generally, children reared in single-parent homes go through life relatively conflict-free when there is sufficient attachment to the remaining parent, and when a fair amount of economic and emotional support is provided by extended family members (Bartol & Bartol, 2017: 60). However, a significant number of youth are reared in disruptive or dysfunctional families where one or both parents are absent, and where the extended family is

unable or unwilling to provide support. This, coupled with poverty and other risk factors related to the family environment, may have a significant impact on the child's risk of coming into conflict with the law (Arthur, 2007: 17; Burton, 2007: 19; Harris, 2009: 41; Rutter, Giller & Hagel, 1998: 183; Siegel, 2002: 158).

Several factors may lead families to separate, including poverty, divorce, ill-health or the death of a parent. Although separations such as these might not affect all families in the same way, and children from single-parent homes are arguably less likely to transgress in comparison to children from conflict-ridden "intact" homes, a sizeable proportion of the youth populace remain vulnerable to the effects of being reared by a single caregiver (Bartol & Bartol, 2017: 61). For these youth separation as a result of death, desertion or divorce, could cause the family structure to become dysfunctional; subsequently deteriorating into frequent conflict, hostility or step-parenting. Under these conditions, adolescents may start abusing illicit substances, engage in sexually promiscuous behaviour, or become violent toward others (Ntshangase, 2015: 38).

Single parents could also become so overwhelmed amidst numerous employment responsibilities and the challenges related to financial security, that they may start to lose time or interest in caring for their offspring (Routt & Anderson, 2011: 12). Arguably, this 'absence' may lead to situations where youth have no role model from whom to learn appropriate behaviour; may experience a lack of parental affection; or may flee the home and seek affection and a sense of belonging in deviant peer groups. This notion is motivated in a study conducted by Sheldon and Eleanor Glueck (in Arthur, 2007: 17), in which the family background of 500 convicted youth were compared to 500 adolescents who had never transgressed. Roughly 60% of the convicted group were reared in structurally non-intact families, in comparison to 33% of youth in the control group. Similar results were obtained by Farrington (in Hawkins, et. al., 2000: 4) who maintain that parent-child separation before the age of 10 years may predict future offending, and that being reared in a single-parent family before the age of 13 years predicted convictions for violent transgressions by age 18.

Research findings by Wedge, Boswell and Dissel (2000: 32) also affirm the impact of being raised in a structurally non-intact family, as a substantial number of youth in conflict with the law were identified as being nurtured for by secondary caregivers such as uncles, aunts or grandparents. Bezuidenhout (2013: 77) concurs, and notes that the large male population in South African correctional centres may mean that a large

proportion of the youth populace are reared in structurally non-intact families. This could subsequently lead adolescents to join gangs in their search for attention, status or a sense of belonging. In this regard, gangs would serve as a solid and stable primary group in which to belong, and provide a platform where adolescents could learn basic features related to the male gender-role.

International research cited in Harris (2009: 41), refers to a sample of 1600 youth convicted of sexual transgressions, which indicated that 78% of the participants were reared in single-parent families, while 57% of the sample had suffered the loss of a parental figure. A separate study by Barbaree and Langton (in Harris, 2009: 41) yielded similar results, as roughly 50% of the participants in their sample who had transgressed came from a single-parent background. Bezuidenhout and Joubert (2003: 59) as well as Bezuidenhout (2013: 76), also make reference to data obtained from 25 youth convicted for serious violations, whom all reported being raised in the absence of their biological father, or by members of the extended family. In this regard, it could be argued that the absence of a caregiver poses challenges in terms of co-parenting, and sometimes jeopardises the social, cognitive and emotional development of the adolescents concerned. Subsequently, affected youth are placed at higher risk of transgressing, as the remaining caregiver may struggle with managing their time amid multiple means of employment, economic insecurity, caring for their offspring and successfully governing their household.

Consequently, adolescents could be left to fend for themselves without proper parental supervision, or may be left at the mercy of older siblings or secondary caregivers. When young persons are not adequately supervised, it threatens their level of socialisation as caregivers may not always be present to punish socially unacceptable behaviour, identify and manage high-risk activities, or teach prosocial behaviour. Youth could be placed at a similar risk when raised by older siblings or secondary caregivers such as grandparents, who may not be as invested in the adequate socialisation of the child. Older siblings might perhaps lack the maturity to fulfil the role of the parent, while grandparents may be too aged or sickly to sufficiently supervise and support the youth in their care.

Further evidence in support of the detrimental effects associated with structurally non-intact families is found in the in-depth analysis of risk and protective factors identified by Barnert, et. al. (2015: 1365). The majority of the 20 incarcerated youth in their

sample described their home environments as “chaotic places” and perceived their parents as “absent” due to working long hours, being single parents, or being incarcerated. The problem of youth who were separated from a parent due to the parent being incarcerated, is also highlighted by Howitt (2015: 75) who denotes the myriad of consequences related to parental incarceration, and the burden placed on the remaining parent. Apart from the apparent financial challenges, the child could also experience emotional distress caused by the separation, or be labelled by their community.

In the latter case, negative tags could be attached to the child due to the illicit behaviour of the parent. These tags could then be internalised and form part of their master status, which sometimes leads to behavioural changes which augment the new identity (i.e. thief, rapist or murderer). Alternatively, the negative label could limit the number of legitimate opportunities available to the child and ‘push’ him/her toward illegitimate opportunities in order to survive (Tannenbaum, 1938: 19; Tierney, 2006: 141). Howitt (2015: 75) concurs and adds that youth may also be left vulnerable to peer influences and gang membership due to the loss of parental modelling and guardianship concomitant to parental incarceration.

Despite the clear risks posed by an incomplete family unit, Bartol and Bartol (2017: 61) confirm the single-parent home as a risk factor, but caution against viewing it in isolation, as it may be influenced by a plethora of other risk factors such as economic difficulty, familial abuse, hostile parenting, inconsistent discipline or a lack of parental supervision. This notion is to a large extent accurate owing to the fact that socio-criminogenic risk factors are generally interrelated (also see section 1.2.4.4.), and because various independent factors pose a threat to the prosocial behaviour of youth.

However, the risk of contravening the law significantly increases when several risk factors operate in concert to influence behaviour (Harder, et. al., 2015: 1059; Hawkins, et. al., 2000: 7; Loeber, et. al., 2008: 147). The risk factors generally concurrent with single-parent families such as financial strain and familial abuse have been discussed in preceding sections of this chapter, while poor parental supervision is discussed in the succeeding section.

3.3.1.5. Inadequate parental supervision

According to Arthur (2007: 19) parental supervision signifies the degree of involvement, attention and awareness caregivers devote to the well-being of their offspring. In instances where biological parents are unavailable or unable to provide adequate monitoring, surrogate caregivers which may include teachers or members of the community, should fulfil this vital role (Bartol & Bartol, 2017: 65). These caregivers are valuable role players with regard to the development of morally acceptable behaviour, but are also responsible for exercising a degree of control over the behaviour and choices of the young persons in their care (Harris, 2009: 44).

Poor supervision thus denotes a degree of carelessness with regard to the application of rules for acceptable conduct, and would also refer to a lack of attentiveness to children, their actions or their whereabouts. A lack of supervision, together with other socio-criminogenic risk factors such as poverty, incomplete families and abuse within the family, are generally regarded to be some of the most pertinent predictors for youth misconduct (Arthur, 2007: 19; Bartol & Bartol, 2017: 65; Bartollas & Schmallegger, 2013: 104; Bezuidenhout, 2013: 77; Gaik, et. al., 2010: 385; Loeber, et. al., 2008: 92; Siegel, 2002: 163).

Furthermore, Social Learning theory postulates that behaviour is acquired through a process of positive and negative reinforcement (Louw & Edwards, 2004: 267; Siegel, 2004: 156). Based on this premise, positive behaviour is reinforced when youth receive rewards for prosocial behaviour, as they then learn to connect socially acceptable behaviour with a positive outcome. Similarly, antisocial behaviour is discouraged when followed by a negative outcome, as adolescents then learn to associate deviant behaviour with an unpleasant experience such as chastisement. Adolescents who are not adequately supervised may thus be at higher risk of coming into conflict with the law as their level of socialisation may be negatively affected due to the frequent 'absence' of their caregivers who may not always be present to identify, and subsequently remedy socially unacceptable behaviour. Youth could, therefore, fail to associate socially acceptable behaviour with rewards (positive reinforcement), or to associate antisocial behaviour with an unpleasant outcome (negative reinforcement).

Adolescents who are inadequately monitored also have a higher probability of associating with deviant peers, which could make them more vulnerable to misconduct as these subcultural groupings are usually regulated by behavioural norms which differ in comparison to conventional rules and values (Tierney, 2006: 101; Williams, 2012: 357; Williams & McShane, 2014: 91). Inadequate monitoring has also been associated with increased levels of illicit substance abuse and unsafe sexual practices (Wang, Deveaux, Li, Marshall, Chen & Stanton, 2014: 44).

Research findings by Chaiken (2000) and Arthur (2007), further support the argument that ineffective monitoring may place adolescents in jeopardy and make them more vulnerable to transgress. Chaiken (2000: 1) conducted a study on the environmental factors which negatively influenced the behaviour of adolescents, and made them more susceptible to engage in illicit activities. Data was obtained from a random sample of 213 males between the ages of 13 and 17 years, who had all been convicted for violent misconduct. The research results indicated that 75% of the sample reported a lack of supervision and after-school care for one or more days per week, 48% recounted never being supervised after school and 23% reported consistent supervision. Lower levels of involvement in law-violating behaviour were reported by the participants (23%) who were regularly supervised, in comparison to those who reported a consistent lack of supervision (75%), and those who were reportedly never supervised (48%). Chaiken (2000: 7) further analysed the offences for which each of the participants had been convicted, in comparison to the level of monitoring received after school. She found that 15% (convicted for assault), 18% (convicted for narcotics-related offences), 22% (convicted for property offences) and 33% (convicted for robbery) of participants in the sample reported having primary caregivers who rarely knew their whereabouts after being dismissed from school.

Arthur (2007: 19) conducted a similar study on two samples consisting of 60 families in the West Midlands. The data indicated that adolescents who were not sufficiently monitored were seven times more likely to engage in law-violating behaviour in comparison to adolescents who reported strict supervision. Six years later, a follow-up study was conducted which confirmed that parental supervision or a lack thereof was the most important single factor with regard to predicting future offending (Arthur, 2007: 19).

Harris (2009: 44) supports the findings of Chaiken (2000) and Arthur (2007), and adds that inadequate monitoring may provide youth with the freedom to act as they please without regard for the consequences associated with their actions. Subsequently, vital processes such as “the development of moral reasoning, impulse control, controlling instant need gratification, aggression and restlessness” are jeopardised, thus increasing the level of vulnerability and susceptibility for youth to come into conflict with the law (Harris, 2009: 44).

Although the role of the family cannot be overemphasised in any attempt to understand or reduce youth misconduct, a myriad of other socio-criminogenic risk factors within the domains of the community, school and peer group may also significantly increase an adolescent’s risk of coming into conflict with the law. The most notable risk factors within each of these domains according to existing literature, are therefore discussed in the following sections.

3.3.2. Socio-criminogenic risk factors within the community context

Risk factors within the neighbourhood or community context operate on both a meso- and macro-level, and may affect a large number of individuals residing in a particular area. Although the family and the school respectively, are recognised as primary and secondary socialisation agents, the community or neighbourhood may also have a significant influence on the behaviour of youth. The research of McCord, et. al. (2001: 89) affirm this, and demonstrate that an individual’s risk of transgressing is significantly increased when reared in an adverse or unfavourable environment. There is also a clear link between specific neighbourhoods and youth misconduct. Hoffman (2006: 869) substantiates this finding by stating that adolescents are more prone to engage in illicit behaviour when residing in areas characterised by poverty, female-headed households or ethnic heterogeneity.

These features generally denote a socially disorganised or anomic environment characterised by defective socialisation and supervision, weak kinship bonds, fewer positive role models and limited opportunities for conventional success (Hoffman, 2006: 869). Socio-criminogenic risk factors within this domain, may therefore increase an adolescents’ risk of coming into conflict with the law, particularly when experienced in combination with risk factors from another domain such as the family, school or peer group. Prominent risk factors discussed in this section include economic inequality,

community disorganisation, civic attitudes or beliefs related to criminal involvement and the availability of illicit substances (Burton, 2007: 103; Hawkins, et. al., 2000: 7).

3.3.2.1. Economic inequality and relative deprivation

According to Fergusson, Swain-Campbell and Horwood (2004: 956); Rutter, Giller and Hagel (1998: 200); and Ntshangase (2015: 37), economic inequality and relative deprivation are typically related to misconduct. In this regard, inequality and deprivation refer to the financial disparity between the upper and working-classes, and is generally calculated in terms of poverty, unemployment and being dependent on welfare. Based on the World Bank Report for 2012, South Africa was ranked as the eighth most unequal country, in comparison to the 140 countries for which data was available. According to Feketha (in *IOL News* 28 March 2018) South Africa is currently ranked as the most unequal country in the world. The Bureau for Market Research at the University of South Africa (UNISA), also conducted a study which indicated that an estimated 75% of the population earns less than R4 000 per month, as opposed to approximately 4% of the population whom earn R60 000+ per month. Based on a poverty line of R 515 (approximately \$37) per capita per month, roughly 54% of the South African population can be classified as impoverished. South Africa's informal settlements, vagabonds and displaced persons also serve as further indicators of the current economic climate (Clark, 2012: 80).

Although a large proportion of society affected by economic inequality may remain law-abiding, many individuals in this position may turn to illicit behaviour in an attempt to alleviate the strain concomitant to socio-economic disadvantage. However, research results pertaining to economic inequality and the subsequent impact on deviance is often contradictory. Yet, there is sufficient evidence to deduce that neighbourhoods characterised by high crime rates are often also characterised as being economically disadvantaged (Agnew, 1999: 124). Moreover, high crime-rate areas provide youth with optimal opportunities to transgress, and with sufficient models from which to acquire the skills necessary to successfully contravene the law (Ntshangase, 2015: 36).

Economic disparity may also be linked to several other socio-criminogenic risk factors including truancy, adolescent gang membership, substance abuse and domestic violence (Bezuidenhout, 2011: 169). Youth reared in areas where inequality is the

norm, may therefore also be exposed to secondary risk factors which further increase their likelihood to transgress. These youth may for instance, be restricted from achieving academic success as they may not have access to the resources needed to successfully complete assignments, prepare for assessments, or participate in sporting activities. Subsequently, their motivation and attachment to school may decrease and they may seek alternative routes to gain status. Academic failure could also lead to higher 'drop-out' rates, which in turn may restrict their access to legitimate opportunities. This could motivate youth to seek out illegitimate avenues to reach success (Khan & Singh, 2014: 113; Tierney, 2006: 104; Williams, 2012: 358; Williams & McShane, 2014: 96).

Youth may also seek out deviant peer groups or gangs which would not only act as a surrogate family, but would fulfil the financial needs which their biological family are not able to. In response to this, they would have to pledge allegiance to the group and adhere to its respective value norms, increasing their risk to transgress. Caregivers could also pressure youth to contribute to the household, or to drop out of school in order to alleviate financial strain. This may lead to situations where young persons' engage in theft, shoplifting, burglary or sex work, either as a means of contributing to the household or as a way to occupy their time.

McCord, et. al. (2001: 89) concur, and state that "living in a neighbourhood where there are high levels of poverty and crime, increases the risk of involvement in serious crime for all children growing up there". The relationship between economic inequality and youth misconduct is also motivated in a study conducted by Kawachi, Kennedy and Wilkinson (1999: 724), who found that countries with a higher level of income disparity also had higher rates of violent crime with particular reference to murder, aggravated assault and robbery. More recently, an in-depth analysis of risk and protective factors using a sample of incarcerated youth also verified the link between economic inequality and youth misconduct. Participants depicted their communities as unpleasant environments where gangs, shootings and homicides were rife. The majority of participants in the study also perceived neighbourhood poverty as a prominent predictor for youth misconduct because "in poor neighbourhoods, negative influences were more rampant" (Barnert, et. al., 2015: 1368).

Bartol and Bartol (2017: 54) further support these findings by emphasising the detrimental effect of poverty on human development, and by noting the correlation between economic disadvantage and persistent violent transgressions for both adolescents and adults, as measured by official, victimisation, and self-report data. Residing in an impoverished community sometimes also poses additional criminogenic risks, including community disorganisation, the abuse of illicit substances and favourable civic attitudes toward law-violating behaviour. The aforementioned challenges are discussed in the subsequent sections.

3.3.2.2. Community disorganisation

The notion of community disorganisation was first acknowledged by Clifford Shaw and Henry McKay during the first half of the twentieth century, based on the discovery that youth misconduct spiked in areas which had changed from affluence to decay. These areas were branded as “transitional neighbourhoods” where corporate enterprises were interspersed with private residences and where youth gangs developed as a means of survival, security and camaraderie (Siegel, 2002: 81). Subsequently, Shaw and McKay proposed that deviance develops due to a breakdown in the level of social control within civic institutions such as the community, school or family. Community disorganisation in this regard, thus refers to a condition in which family bonds deteriorate or become non-existent, life is superficial, relationships are short-lived, individuals are non-empathetic, and where the community structure is unable to sustain social control (Bartollas & Schmallegger, 2013: 54; Kawachi, et. al., 1999: 719; Kubrin & Weitzer, 2003: 374).

From this perspective, an integral component of socially organised communities would be the ability to monitor and manage the behaviour of adolescents. Such ‘management’ would entail supervision of leisure-time activities, intervention in ‘street-corner’ assemblage, and confronting youth perceived to be involved in deviance. In this regard, socially organised communities are better equipped to ‘control’ or manage the behaviour of youth, subsequently reducing the risk of youth misconduct and gang formation. It could therefore be argued that community disorganisation negatively influences the risk for transgressing, and may lead to higher rates of youth misconduct, erratic cultural norms and low socio-economic status (Bartollas & Schmallegger, 2013:

54; Kawachi, et. al., 1999: 719; Kubrin & Weitzer, 2003: 374; Siegel, 2002: 81; Tierney, 2006: 91; Williams & McShane, 2014: 50).

Based on this premise, Shaw and McKay developed their Social Disorganisation theory in 1942, founded on the Ecological or Concentric Zones model of Robert Park and Earnest Burgess. According to this model, a community could be seen as a 'social organism' composed of a series of successive concentric circles branching out from a central point. Their model further suggests that crime and other social iniquities such as poverty, unemployment, limited conventional avenues to success and indistinct cultural norms, would be highest in the central zone and would systematically decrease toward the outer zones. Subsequently, the first zone (the central business district) would have higher levels of crime in comparison to the fourth zone (the residential zone), primarily due to the social characteristics extant in each zone (Williams, 2012: 305; Williams & McShane, 2014: 49).

Following this model, Shaw and McKay (in Bartollas & Schmallegger, 2013: 54) considered the level of community disorganisation to be highest in the central zone, and to systematically improve toward the outer zones. It could thus be argued that youth who reside closer to the city centre are more at risk of misconduct due to a higher level of community disorganisation, as these areas would arguably provide more opportunities to transgress, increased exposure to criminal role models, and lower levels of attachment to social institutions such as the family or school. Emmett (2001: 4) supports this notion by affirming that institutions such as the family or community exert a level of social control over the behaviour of youth. Communities, families and schools then discourage illicit behaviour by establishing a level of commitment to social rules, which would be jeopardised by engaging in illicit behaviour. Youth residing in socially disorganised areas are thus at risk of transgressing as the influence of "informal social controls become problematic when institutions like the family and community breakdown, and are no longer available to exert the pressures necessary to uphold the law" (Emmett, 2001: 4). Subsequently, it could be argued that weak informal social control decreases the level of youth supervision from community organisations, which in turn increases the risk of youth misconduct.

Additionally, this lack of community supervision may also restrict the degree of youth participation in community organisations, which may then lead to weaker ties with the community (Kaylen & Pridemore, 2013: 907). The community may then be less willing to intervene when youth become involved in antisocial behaviour. Disorganised communities are also characterised by residential mobility, which may further increase the risk for youth misconduct, as it would be more difficult to establish prosocial bonds when community members constantly move in and out of the area. Residential mobility is also associated with decreased guardianship, which may lead to higher rates of youth involvement in crime and violence (Kaylen & Pridemore, 2013: 907).

Ethnic heterogeneity is another element which is often associated with disorganised communities, and may negatively impact on the rate of youth misconduct. This implies a myriad of cultural norms present in one geographic area, which may influence both the level and quality of youth supervision, and the socialisation of young persons. On one hand, the capacity to supervise youth in the community and control youth peer groups is reduced due to cultural disparities regarding supervision, and on the other, these disparities may also negatively influence socialisation processes as norms may be disproportionately reinforced in the family, school and community (Kaylen & Pridemore, 2013: 907). Subsequently, this may affect social learning processes as discussed in section 3.3.1.5., and may thus lead to higher rates of youth misconduct. Substance abuse is another feature commonly found in socially disorganised areas, and is therefore discussed in more detail in the following section.

3.3.2.3. The use of illicit substances

Substances such alcohol and narcotics are used by a large proportion of the youth populace, both globally and domestically. The use of these substances have also been linked to increased rates of youth victimisation, as well as to higher rates of youth misconduct, as areas with high consumption rates offer highly profitable opportunities for unlawful behaviour (Bezuidenhout, 2013: 53). These opportunities may include the production and trade in illicit substances, theft, violence, increased gang activity and the bribery of state officials. Bartol and Bartol (2017: 490) concur, and highlight illicit substance use by youth as one of the most significant concerns in contemporary society. Apart from the underage consumption of alcohol, a number of other illicit

substances may also be used by youth. These substances include cannabis, cocaine, heroin, ecstasy, methamphetamine (tik) and mandrax (Bezuidenhout, 2013: 53).

Youth residing in communities where these substances are freely available or frequently used, are thus vulnerable to experiment with these substances themselves as they may model the behaviour observed from other persons in their community. This may place them both at risk of becoming addicted to these illicit substances, as well as increase their risk of transgressing while under the influence of these substances. The most common illicit substances used by youth may be organised into several categories as illustrated in Table 5 below:

Table 5
A categorisation of the most common illicit substances used by adolescents

Category	Description	Example
Depressants	Depressants place the central nervous system into a sleep-like state.	Alcohol, cannabis, heroin, or morphine.
Stimulants	Stimulants produce increased blood pressure and physical activity, and may make users more impulsive, confident or euphoric.	Cocaine, nicotine, or caffeine.
Inhalants	Inhalants can cause dizziness, drowsiness, short-term euphoria, slurred speech and sometimes even hallucinations.	Lighter fluid, paint thinner, glue, petrol, or nail polish.
Hallucinogens	Usually associated with hallucinations and may cause psychotic behaviour.	Ketamine, mescaline, or cannabis.

(Adapted from Bartollas & Schmallegger, 2013: 154; Siegel, 2002: 241).

According to Siegel (2002: 238), 19% of incarcerated Australian youth have reported using heroin at least once, while an estimated 50% of British Colombian youth have reported using illicit substances. Self-report studies also indicate that roughly 90% of high school learners use alcohol, while approximately 50% report having used narcotics (Siegel, 2002: 238). Uniform Crime Reports, as compiled by the Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) in the United States, also indicate that more than 141 000 adolescents have been detained on local and state drug charges, while the Arrestee Drug Abuse Monitoring (ADAM) programme found that approximately 60% of males and 46% of females tested positive for drug use at arrest. The link between illicit substance use and youth misconduct has also been confirmed by Harder, Knorth and Kalverboer (2015: 1059) who examined the dynamic risk factors (criminogenic needs) in a sample of 164 Dutch adolescents in secure residential care. Based on their findings, Harder, et. al. (2015: 1059) report that illicit substance use was one of the three most prevalent risk factors for the participants in their sample, before being admitted to secure residential care. Apart from the use of illicit substances, associating with deviant peers, poor parental supervision, poor academic performance and unstructured leisure-time activities were also highlighted as pertinent risk factors for youth misconduct. Furthermore, governmental studies with Grade 12 learners indicated that roughly 50% have experimented with an illicit substance, 27% have used substances other than marijuana, and 20% had done so in the same year the survey was conducted (Benekos & Merlo, 2009: 85). Bartol and Bartol (2017: 490) add that roughly 8.8% of adolescents in the age group 12 – 17 years, and 21.5% in the age group 18 – 25 years, report current illicit substance use.

Domestically, increased usage rates for adolescent cocaine and heroin abuse have also been reported. The University of South Africa (UNISA) conducted a survey on 2 281 learners from Grade 7, Grade 10 and Grade 11. The results indicated that 25% of the participants had inhaled glue, petroleum or paint thinners, 27% had used mandrax, ecstasy, heroin or other substances, and 22% had used cocaine. On average, 33% of the participants reported that they could obtain marijuana within an hour, while 25% indicated that they could obtain ecstasy, cocaine or heroin within 24 hours (Bezuidenhout, 2013: 53).

As noted in the previous chapter (see section 2.2.2.1.4.), adolescents are sometimes tempted to use illicit substances as a means with which to alleviate stress, manage frustration, or occupy their free time (Madu & Matla, 2003: 122). However, Parry, et. al. (2004: 430) caution against the use of illicit substances due to the detrimental effects on the health and wellbeing of the user. These effects range from an increased risk for injury or death, to academic failure and suicidal ideation (Bartol & Bartol, 2017: 491). Several studies have also demonstrated a clear correlation between substance use and criminal involvement for both adults and youth (Harris, 2009: 44). In a British study conducted on detained youth, 40% of the sample indicated that their use of illicit substances was directly related to their law-violating behaviour. A similar study conducted in Australia indicated that 70% of their detained youth populace was intoxicated during the commission of their offence, with roughly 33% of youth convicted for violent offences, ascribing their behaviour to being under the influence of an illicit substance (Harris, 2009: 45).

Whilst under the influence of illicit substances, youth may be more likely to display poor judgement, or to behave in a reckless, negligent and impulsive fashion. They would also be less likely to consider the consequences of their actions and may have a higher propensity to submit to peer pressure. Subsequently, this increases their risk of engaging in law-violating behaviour, as illicit substance use may impair their judgement, or incite thrill-seeking or high-risk behaviour. Lipsey and Derzon (1998) conducted an investigation on the impact of substance abuse on offending, and found that substance use or abuse contributes to youth misconduct and that substance abuse from an early age is a significant predictor for serious misconduct, second to having a history of law-violating behaviour. The link between substance use and youth misconduct is also supported by Benekos and Merlo (2009: 97), who affirm that adolescents who use illicit substances are more likely to transgress, have higher arrest rates and exhibit a greater degree of criminal versatility.

According to Bartol and Bartol (2017: 493), it is crucial that the correlation between youth misconduct and the use of illicit substances be viewed from two perspectives. The first entails the use, trade, production and distribution of illegal substances, which in itself constitutes an offence. The second involves the effect which narcotics may have on the behaviour of the user, with regard to the promotion of law-violating

behaviour. Recent research findings based on the aforementioned perspectives have been summarised by Bartol and Bartol (2017: 493) as follows:

- I. More individuals are detained for drug offences compared to any other offence.
- II. Arrestees regularly test positive for illegal substance use.
- III. Arrestees and individuals already convicted for crime were often under the influence of illegal substances during the commission of their offence.
- IV. Individuals may engage in economic offences to acquire illicit substances.
- V. Drug trading often engenders violent offences.

As indicated previously, it could be argued that youth residing in communities where illicit substances or more readily available would be at higher risk of experimenting with, or in more extreme cases, abusing alcohol and illicit substances. This could then increase their risk of coming into conflict with the law, either by way of acquiring or using the prohibited substance, or as a result of the effect the illicit substance may have on their behaviour. The risk of transgressing would be even higher in cases where youth become addicted to an illicit substance, as he/she may then start to contravene the law in order to acquire the banned substance. Consequently, they may be at an increased risk of engaging in contraventions such as shoplifting, petty theft, burglary or the sex trade. This would be particularly prevalent in socially disorganised communities where criminal behaviour is condoned, as communities such as these would provide youth with inappropriate role models from which to learn offending behaviour, in addition to providing a criminal network where youth could learn the skills needed for the effective commission of crime. Accordingly, civic attitudes toward crime is discussed in the subsequent section.

3.3.2.4. Civic attitudes and beliefs related to criminal involvement

Youth who reside in areas where crime and deviance are perceived as acceptable means with which to achieve social goals, may be more inclined to engage in law-violating behaviour, as they could regard criminality to be a 'normal' phenomenon. These youth would also be exposed to negative role models, which may jeopardise their socialisation by reinforcing the idea that crime is viable in certain circumstances, or that unlawfulness is a more efficient or effortless way to reach goals. Bezuidenhout (2013: 74) concurs, and notes that many South Africans, regardless of their culture, view crime as acceptable "as long as one does not get caught". Furthermore,

individuals would experience a decreased level of social control when residing in a community where crime is condoned.

Pelser (2008) argues that this is particularly true with regard to South African youth, who may in many instances, be negatively socialised or excluded. Moreover, the notion that social institutions such as the family or school is essential with regard to adequate socialisation and healthy development, was compromised by the Youth Revolt in 1976 and the continuous rebellion through the 1980's, and has not yet been effectively repaired. This left South African youth with a sense of being 'lost', and they are continuing to learn how to be lost due to the misconception of crime in South Africa, poor strategy options and wavering crime prevention policies (Pelser, 2008). Based on this premise, it could be argued that youth are sometimes raised in extremely violent circumstances, which cultivates a subculture of survival where acts such as vandalism, theft and violence are internalised and viewed as part of their everyday lives (Bezuidenhout, 2013: 75).

Theoretically, the aforementioned argument is supported by the Social Learning perspective. Based on this premise, or more specifically behaviour modelling, it could be surmised that youth may be more at risk of coming into conflict with the law when residing in communities where adults themselves transgress, as youth would then observe and eventually mimic this behaviour (Williams, 2008: 275). In addition to this, antisocial behaviour may form part of the socialisation process of adolescents, as adults may fail to chastise young persons for engaging in undesirable behaviour when they do so themselves. This may encourage criminality, as youth may then fail to establish a link between crime and chastisement. Alternatively, youth may develop a favourable view toward crime, as they could learn to associate criminality with social rewards. Thus, reinforcing the notion that "crime pays", and motivating them to utilise illicit means in their pursuit of cultural goals (Williams, 2008: 273).

In addition to the socio-criminogenic risk factors already discussed, certain factors within the school and peer group contexts may also significantly increase the risk of transgressing. Specific factors within the domain of the school include academic failure, weak levels of attachment to school and disorganised school environments. These factors are discussed in the succeeding section.

3.3.3. Socio-criminogenic risk factors within the school context

Apart from the family, the school is generally considered to be one of the most important social institutions with regard to the cognitive, ethical and behavioural development of youth. Ideally, schools should be considered safe, secure environments where young people not only acquire new knowledge and skills, but where they are also afforded the opportunity for intellectual, emotional, moral and cultural development. Ntshangase (2015: 41) concurs and highlights the following important functions incumbent of the school:

- I. Schools should impart the relevant knowledge and skills in order to prepare learners for the 'adult' role.
- II. Social norms and values should be imparted as a response to the demands of conformity imposed by society.
- III. The school should endorse and advance societal needs.
- IV. Schools should be responsible for protecting learners who are at risk, in- and outside of the school environment.

Arguably, many schools in contemporary South Africa experience numerous challenges which render the environment un conducive to learning and development. These challenges include poor infrastructure, limited resources, staff shortages as well as elevated rates of bullying and school-based violence. These challenges also place youth at risk of coming into conflict with the law, as it may have a negative impact on the socialisation process. Bezuidenhout (2013: 79) supports this inference, and highlights pertinent risk factors in South African schools which may motivate youth to engage in law-violating behaviour.

These factors include a lack of transformation in schools, learners' involvement in gang activities, the presence of firearms on the school premises, the use of illicit substances, a lack of counselling services, and parental apathy. Other socio-criminogenic risk factors typically related to the school, include poor school attendance, poor academic performance and weak levels of attachment or commitment to school. According to Christle, Jolivette and Nelson (2005: 69), the aforementioned factors have been identified as key components in a "school to prison pipeline". Subsequently, these factors form the basis of the discussion in the subsequent sections.

3.3.3.1. Poor Academic Performance

Poor academic performance can be closely linked to youth misconduct according to Siegel (2002: 215), who argues that academic failure may be a more pertinent predictor for youth misconduct in comparison to other risk factors such as economic status, ethnic background, or peer group association. Research aimed at comparing the academic records of youth in conflict with the law, and youth who have never transgressed, have determined that academic deficiency is often linked to youth misconduct (Siegel, 2002: 215). Learners who perform poorly at school may also become frustrated by their inability to achieve social status in the school context, and may thus seek alternative routes to gain status (Ntshangase, 2015: 45). This could involve engaging in risky behaviour such as consuming alcohol or illicit substances, bullying their peers, or rebelling against teachers. These learners arguably also have a higher probability of leaving school, which could further increase their risk of coming into conflict with the law, as they may start engaging in illicit behaviour to support themselves or their families. Siegel (2002: 215) affirms the above by stating that failure at school may lead to feelings of frustration or rejection, which in turn could create the perception that success through conventional means is unattainable. Subsequently, this may lead youth to seek out like-minded marginalised peers, and together engage in socially unacceptable behaviour in order to boost their self-worth or to attain some degree of status.

Bartollas and Schmallegger (2013: 124) further support this argument by noting that both self-report data and official police statistics indicate that misconduct is strongly associated with poor academic performance for both male and female youth populations. According to Bartollas and Schmallegger (2013: 125) academic failure may lead to feelings of dislike toward school, rejection of the school's authority and ultimately, the commission of deviant acts. Based on this research, it could be argued that weak attachment to school would decrease the institution's ability to properly socialise youth, particularly in instances where youth are also exposed to risk factors within the family unit. This may reinforce negative behaviour patterns which may ultimately lead to law violations. Additionally, academic failure could also mean that less legitimate opportunities are available to youth. This limitation on conventional avenues to success, may then push youth toward utilising illegitimate means to reach their goals in order to become successful (Bartollas & Schmallegger, 2013: 60; Cloward

& Ohlin, 1960: 131; Vetter & Silverman, 1986: 322; Williams, 2012: 358; Williams & McShane, 2014: 100).

Bartol and Bartol (2017: 59) concur and provide further evidence supporting the correlation between academic failure and the development of antisocial behaviour. A study exploring the educational level of correctional clients in the United States found that “75% of state prison inmates, 59% of federal inmates, and 69% of jail inmates did not complete high school” (Bartol & Bartol, 2017: 59). Furthermore, the data obtained from this study indicated that ‘dropping out’ of school increases the probability of being arrested during a lifetime by 350%.

Likewise, Sutherland (2011: 1) obtained data from several longitudinal studies which also suggest that youth who underperform academically are more susceptible to engaging in crime, as opposed to those who perform at an adequate or exceptional level. Moreover, youthful transgressors may have significant deficits with regard to reading, mathematics, and written as well as oral language (Sutherland, 2011: 3). This may affect their level of employability, which in turn could limit the availability of legitimate opportunities and may ultimately leave them with very few alternatives other than offending.

In a separate study conducted by Barnert, et. al. (2015: 1365), several participants reported that poor school performance “sets youths on a bad pathway” which may lead to frustration, truancy, or leaving school. This, in addition to peer pressure and efforts to ‘fit in’ amongst peers, often leads to deviant or antisocial behaviour. In the South African context, an in-depth qualitative analysis of criminogenic risk factors identified by detained youth in Durban, yielded similar results. Khan and Singh (2014: 111) conducted semi-structured interviews with 77 participants, and found that 92.3% had not completed school. Thus, it could be argued that poor academic performance may have led these participants to ‘drop out’ of school, which subsequently restricted their access to the labour market and increased their susceptibility to transgress in order to meet their social needs.

Despite the aforementioned research findings, Siegel (2002: 217) cautions against inaccurately surmising that academic failure exclusively precedes deviant or antisocial behaviour, as academic failure and youth misconduct often share a common

foundation. Siegel (2002: 217) outlines this foundation between academic failure and youth misconduct as follows:

- I. Youthful transgressors may have a lower IQ, which could contribute to poor academic achievement.
- II. Youth misconduct can be correlated with a tumultuous family life, which may also influence academic performance.
- III. Misconduct is often linked to impulsivity or low self-control, which has the potential to produce school failure.

Therefore, it should be noted that although academic failure can be regarded as a risk factor for antisocial behaviour, deviance may also be identified as a risk factor for poor school performance. Furthermore, Siegel (2002: 217) highlights the fact that adolescents who perform poorly at school and transgress, may be exposed to other socio-criminogenic risk factors such as depression, illicit substance use, or familial abuse. Academic failure and youth misconduct may also be driven by disorganisation within the school environment, limited educational resources and the involvement in deviant peer groups. The latter, are discussed in the subsequent sections of this chapter.

3.3.3.2. School structure and conditions within the school

Masitsa (2011: 165) and Ntshangase (2015: 42) highlight certain elements which contribute to effective teaching and learning practices within the school context. These factors include: consistent disciplinary practices; an environment conducive to teaching and learning; motivated educators; and effective school management policies. Arguably, the absence of any of these elements could jeopardise the functioning of the school system and place learners at risk of coming into conflict with the law. The following discussion explores some of the risk factors which may be positively correlated with youth misconduct:

3.3.3.2.1. An unhealthy school climate

According to Sutherland (2011: 3), an unhealthy school climate can be described as “a poorly organised, malfunctioning school that has a prevalent sense of despondency among students and staff, accompanying high rates of teacher and student absenteeism, and a higher incidence of school mobility”. Other features characteristic

of an unhealthy school climate may include unmotivated educators, educators who are consistently late for class, learners being left unsupervised, overcrowded classrooms, poor infrastructure and a high learner-to-educator ratio. Bezuidenhout (2013: 80) concurs, and notes that many South African youth may be subjected to these conditions as many schools do not have adequate fencing, or basic facilities such as running water, restrooms, or tables and chairs for learners to use. Under these conditions, learners may perceive the school environment as impersonal or unsafe, which may cause them to become disaffected and detached from school. Subsequently, this could contribute to academic failure, higher 'drop-out' rates and criminal offending (Sutherland, 2011: 3).

3.3.3.2.2. Poor school ethos

Youth may also be placed at risk for misconduct if educational institutions fail to promote social values and norms through its ethos, or when educators fail to consistently demonstrate these values (Ntshangase, 2015: 42). This may lead to the differential reinforcement of conduct norms which could obstruct the socialisation process of learners, and subsequently increase their risk of transgressing. A lack of ethical direction may also lead to conflict or poor participation in scholarly activities for both educators and learners. Harris (2009: 46) concurs and notes that educational institutions may experience an even greater challenge with regard to instilling prosocial attitudes when youth are inadequately socialised in the family context, or when they are exposed to crime and violence within the community. This is particularly problematic with reference to public schools which experience a myriad of social and economic challenges which may overshadow the importance of developing and abiding to high ethical standards and therefore, a strict code of conduct.

3.3.3.2.3. Suspension from school

Based on a meta-analysis of studies related to youth misconduct, Christle, Jolivet and Nelson (2005: 70), propose that academic difficulties often promote behaviour problems which may result in learners being suspended from school. Exclusionary discipline practices such as suspension, detach learners from academic instruction and may inhibit their educational progress. This may then lead to a "failure cycle" which may restrict opportunities to acquire academic skills and learn socially acceptable behaviour (Christle, et. al., 2005: 70). Chaiken (2000: 9) supports this claim, and

affirms the link between suspension from school and subsequent offending. Based on the research findings by Chaiken (2000: 9), the frequency of transgressions were three times higher for boys who had been suspended in the six months prior to her research, and more than four times higher at the time of conducting her interviews.

Learners who are frequently suspended from school may also be subjected to negative labelling practices by both learners and educators. This may further perpetuate behavioural misconduct, as tags such as ‘troublemaker’ or ‘delinquent’ could be internalised by the learner and form part of his/her self-image. The learner may then alter their behaviour to fit the negative label. Alternatively, negative labelling could also restrict the learners’ access to legitimate opportunities or motivate him/her to join a deviant peer group, further increasing their risk of coming into conflict with the law (Tannenbaum, 1938: 19; Sutherland, 2011: 5; Williams & McShane, 2014: 115). Christle, et. al. (2005: 70) support this claim, and add that suspension may also lead to higher dropout rates. Arguably, learners would then have more leisure time in which to associate with antisocial peers, or to engage in socially unacceptable behaviour.

3.3.3.2.4. School-based violence and crime

De Wet (2003: 89) and Harris (2009: 46) highlight violence as a key concern in South African schools. According to Eisenbraun (2007: 460), the definition of school violence has evolved over the last decade and the term is currently viewed as “a multi-faceted construct that involves both criminal acts and aggression in schools, which inhibit development and learning, as well as harm the school’s climate”. Based on this view, the broad scope of school-based violence is extended beyond merely focusing on the perpetrator of violence, and also includes the direct victim and indirect victims who may experience fear and insecurity, as well as the disciplinary system enforced by the school (Eisenbraun, 2007: 460). Harris (2009: 46) concurs, and adds that discipline is a particular challenge in South African schools as bullying and subsequent violent behaviour is often inefficiently dealt with. School-based violence and crime may also impede on the educational process and make it difficult for educators to teach learners about having respect for property and the rights of others.

It could therefore be argued that exposure to school-based violence not only jeopardises the safety of learners, but destabilises the academic programme of the school. This may lead to poor school achievement, academic failure, truancy, as well

as higher dropout rates, which could subsequently increase the risk for youth misconduct. Youth may also become desensitised to aggression and violence, further increasing their risk to transgress as violence may form part of their socialisation process. Older youth who perpetrate acts of violence at school may also be viewed as role models by younger learners, more so when violence is perceived as acceptable in their community and home environments (De Wet, 2003: 93; Harris, 2009: 46).

3.3.3.2.5. Maltreatment by educators

School-based violence and maltreatment by educators may carry similar consequences with regard to the education and development of learners, as well as their susceptibility to transgress. Sutherland (2011: 4) highlights two pathways in which educators may mistreat learners, namely deliberate and unintentional maltreatment. The former signifies intent to cause harm and involves punitive disciplinary approaches such as verbal assaults, sarcasm, sexual harassment, or condoning peer humiliation. Alternatively, the latter entails low levels of human interaction and providing limited opportunities for learners to develop a sense of self-worth (Sutherland, 2011: 4). Mistreatment in either form, may traumatise learners, jeopardise their academic performance, and increase their risk to transgress due to feelings of inadequacy, degradation, incompetence or despondency.

Based on data obtained from a National School Violence Study conducted by the Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention (CJCP) in 2007, South African learners may also be regarded as vulnerable to maltreatment by educators. This study involved 12 794 learners, 521 educators and 264 school headmasters in 245 primary and secondary schools across all nine provinces (Clark, 2012: 82). The data indicated that 40% of school headmasters reported at least one incident of educators verbally abusing learners, with an additional 25% of headmasters receiving reports of educators physically abusing learners. A National Youth Lifestyle Survey conducted by the CJCP in 2008, also revealed that 51.7% of the 4 391 respondents had been beaten, caned, or spanked by educators or by the headmaster. Maltreatment by educators, whether verbally, physically or sexually, not only affects academic achievement, but also influences learners' attitudes and behaviour toward authority figures. Furthermore, maltreatment may also reduce the level of attachment to school

and could cause learners to rebel against rules set by the school, thus increasing their risk to transgress (Ntshangase, 2015: 46).

In addition to the aforementioned risk factors within the school context, Harris (2009: 46) also highlights the discrepancy between public and private schools in South Africa. Private schools tend to have highly qualified educators, more access to academic resources and better classroom and sporting facilities. In contrast, public schools are more likely to experience challenges such as staff shortages, a lack of academic resources and poor infrastructure. According to Harris (2009: 46), these challenges may lead to feelings of deprivation and worthlessness amongst learners, and could later manifest as antisocial behaviour toward their peers or educators. Violent behaviour is also more likely to occur in unkempt and overcrowded schools where space is limited, as this could lead to frustration and conflict between learners (De Wet, 2003: 92). Sutherland (2011: 3) proposes that schools may become “breeding grounds for the development of criminal offending” as it provides ample opportunities for learners to form antisocial peer relationships or join gangs. Subsequently, risk factors within the peer group are discussed in the succeeding section.

3.3.4. Socio-criminogenic risk factors within the peer group context

Despite the plethora of socio-criminogenic risk factors which youth could be exposed to in the context of the family, community and school, a prevalent finding in studies concerning youth in conflict with the law, is that antisocial behaviour is strongly correlated with deviant peers. In this regard, factors such as deviant peer-association, attachment to antisocial peers and peer pressure have all been closely linked to youth misconduct (Harris, 2009: 54). Deviant peer-associations have also long been highlighted as a key aetiological factor in the development of youth misconduct by criminologists and developmental psychologists, as youth tend to spend less time with parents and progressively spend more time with their peers. The probability of engaging in law-violating behaviour is thus increased when youth spend the majority of their leisure time in the company of deviant peers, as this may increase their level of exposure to antisocial values and norms. Furthermore, the risk of developing antisocial behavioural traits is also positively correlated with having a strong level of attachment to peers from an early age, as well as through spending time away from

the “more” structured family environment (Keijsers, Branje, Hawk, Schwartz, Frijns, Koot, van Lier & Meeus, 2012: 651; Siegel, 2002: 185).

Several empirical studies (Barnert, Perry, Azzi, Shetgiri, Ryan, Dudovitz, Zima, & Chung, 2015; Dishion, Nelson, Winter & Bullock, 2004; Harder, Knorth, & Kalverboer, 2015; Khan & Singh, 2014) have also highlighted deviant peer group association as a pertinent contributing factor for youth misconduct. Harris (2009: 55) concurs, and notes the importance of recognising the multidimensional nature of peer relationships with regard to understanding the processes inherent in peer socialisation which sustain the development of socially maladaptive and problem behaviour. Arguably, youth tend to seek out peers who display behaviour patterns similar to their own, and there is usually a general congruency among peers with reference to aggression, substance use and sexual promiscuity. It therefore, becomes apparent “that once the friendship network is established, a context is provided in which peers can influence each other” (Harris, 2009: 55).

Despite functioning as a source of support to youth, peer relationships may thus also introduce or reinforce existing antisocial behaviour. Subsequently, the following section explores peer rejection, deviant peer group association and gang membership as risk factors for youth misconduct based on available literature and empirical data.

3.3.4.1. Peer rejection

As noted in the foregoing section, peer affiliations present with the potential to make an inimitable and vital contribution to the social and emotional development of youth. During the adolescent phase of life-span development, parental influence on behaviour may often be disregarded, and substituted by new behavioural norms acquired in the peer group context (Bartol & Bartol, 2017: 55; Higgins, Piquero & Piquero, 2011: 1278). In this regard, youth may be particularly vulnerable of engaging in law-violating behaviour when joining a deviant peer group, or when developing strong attachment to peers who are involved in antisocial behaviour. Subsequently, peer influence is identified as a key predictor for youth misconduct in several research studies pertaining to deviant peer group association, gang membership and peer attachment (Barnert, et. al., 2015; Dishion, Nelson, Winter & Bullock, 2004; Harder, et. al., 2015; Khan & Singh, 2014; McCord, et. al., 2001; Peacock, 2006). However, the correlation between peer rejection and subsequent antisocial behaviour is often

overlooked in this context, despite being highlighted as one of the most pertinent predictors motivating youth misconduct (Bartol & Bartol, 2017: 56).

According to Ettekal and Ladd (2015: 615), adolescents generally spend a significant quantity of their time with peers in an unsupervised setting, and tend to experience a social context represented by unique relational processes which may create multiple opportunities and pressures to engage in law-violating conduct. More specifically, Ettekal and Ladd (2015: 615) highlight peer rejection and deviant peer group association as two significant forms of peer relational processes which have the potential to increase the risk of engaging in unlawful behaviour. Bartol and Bartol (2017: 56) concur, and add that peer acceptance and approval is a crucial developmental task in early adolescence, generally leading to healthy psychological and social growth. Inversely, the experience of social rejection by peers during early adolescence may be a key risk factor for misconduct during the adolescent phase, and for antisocial behaviour throughout the life-course. The experience of peer rejection in Grade 1 (roughly around the age of 6 years), strongly correlates with socially maladaptive behaviour by Grade 4 (roughly around the age of 10 years). Similarly, youth who have experienced rejection by peers for two to three years prior to reaching Grade 2, have a 50% chance of exhibiting deviant behaviour later in adolescence, compared to 9% in cases where youth were able to avoid early peer rejection (Bartol & Bartol, 2017: 56). Furthermore, Bartol and Bartol (2017: 56) assert that “peer-rejected children frequently interact with one another or gravitate to antisocial peers”. Ultimately, this may expose youth to antisocial values and norms, which have the potential to increase their risk of engaging in law-violating behaviour, using illicit substances, or displaying other forms of maladaptive behaviour.

The research of Wasserman, Keenan, Tremblay, Coie, Herrenkohl, Loeber and Petechuk (2003: 7) and Chen, Drabick and Burgers (2016: 1), assert that rejected youth may mimic one another’s undesirable or aggressive behaviour; and they also note a consistent link between peer rejection and the development and maintenance of youth misconduct. Chen, et. al. (2016: 8) also found that rejected youth have limited opportunities for positive peer interactions, which may negatively affect the development of appropriate social skills. Youth who experience peer rejection thus tend to exhibit fewer effective responses to peer conflict in comparison to their “non-rejected” counterparts, and display an increased propensity to respond to peer

provocation in an aggressive or antisocial fashion. Youth who are subjected to peer rejection may also be more likely to respond to the behavioural intentions of their peers in a hostile manner, as the suffering of rejection by peers has the potential to shape an individual's social information processing patterns. Subsequently, this may "increase the probability of aggressive responding and consequently mediate the relation between peer rejection and increasing conduct problems" (Chen, et. al., 2016: 8).

The research of Wasserman, et. al. (2003: 7) further supports the correlation between peer rejection and deviance by demonstrating that children who display signs of aggression from an early age, are at significantly greater risk for later chronic offending compared to youth who are not rejected by their peers. A possible explanation for this correlation is based on the aforementioned evidence presented by Chen, et. al. (2016: 8) which confirms the perception that the motives of others are hostile, and subsequently warrants a more aggressive response. In addition to this, Wasserman, et. al. (2003: 7) propose that rejection leads to limited social options, which may encourage participation in deviant sub-groups. Rejected youth usually also develop a tenuous sense of belonging, which could reinforce antisocial behaviour in an attempt to gain status in these deviant sub-groups. Based on this premise, peer rejection may also lead to associating with deviant peers or criminal gangs. The aforementioned risk factors are thus explored in the subsequent section.

3.3.4.2. Antisocial peer affiliation

According to Monahan, Steinberg and Cauffman (2009: 1520), as well as McCord, et. al. (2001: 80) there is a robust social component to law-violating behaviour during adolescence, as youth misconduct is most likely to occur in groups. Peer pressure is also viewed as a prominent motivating factor for various forms of deviant behaviour during adolescence, ranging from misdemeanours to more serious forms of misconduct. Wasserman, et. al. (2003: 6) substantiate this claim, and assert that deviant peer affiliation is often associated with an increased rate of co-offending and in extreme cases, gang membership. One of the earliest reports on the influence of deviant peer-association, published by Shaw and McKay in the 1930s, indicated that 80% of youth in conflict with the law in Chicago, were arrested with co-offenders and

that 90% of the offenses recorded in juvenile court records involved two or more accomplices (Burfeind & Bartusch, 2006: 425; Wasserman, et. al., 2003: 6).

Since this pioneering work, several studies have supported the notion that associating with deviant peers contributes to higher rates of youth misconduct. West and Farrington (as cited in McCord, et. al., 2001: 81), conducted longitudinal research on antisocial British youth in 1977, demonstrating the link between peer affiliation and youth misconduct as youth in the sample reported that “withdrawal from delinquent peer affiliations was an important factor in desistance from offending”. Data obtained from a National Youth Survey conducted on a representative sample of youth aged 11 to 17 years in the United States in 1995, yielded similar findings. The data indicated a strong correlation between law-violating behaviour and associating with deviant peers. The most persistent pattern identified, was “a child moving from association with non-delinquent peers to association with slightly deviant peers, and then on to the commission of minor offences. More frequent association with deviant peers and more serious offending followed, leading to the highest level of association with deviant peers” (Wasserman, et. al., 2003: 6). Likewise, Burfeind and Bartusch (2006: 425) report that youth who transgress in a group context usually violate the law more frequently and also perpetrate more serious transgressions in comparison to youth acting alone.

In a separate study, Hawkins, et. al. (2000) conducted a meta-analysis of 66 quantitative studies examining predictors for youth violence, and found that deviant peers had a greater influence on violence during the later stages of adolescent development, as their statistical analysis indicated the greatest influence at ages 10, 14 and 16 years respectively. McCord, et. al. (2001: 81), concur with these findings by stating that “peers appear to be most important during late adolescence, with their importance peaking at about 17”. Lipsey and Derzon (1998), and Van der Merwe and Dawes (2007: 99) also highlight antisocial peer association as a key predictor for youth misconduct between the ages of 12 and 14 years. A more recent longitudinal study conducted by Harder, et. al. (2015) on detained youth in The Netherlands, utilised a mixed-methods approach to examine the criminogenic risk factors for deviant behaviour. The data from this study also highlighted deviant peer association and substance abuse as the most important predictors for youth misconduct (also see section 3.3.2.3.).

In South Africa, Khan and Singh (2014) conducted a study similar to that of Harder, et. al. (2015), which focused on identifying the psycho-socio and criminogenic risk factors of a group of youth in detention in the metropolitan city of Durban. Amongst other criminogenic risk factors such as the said academic failure and low socio-economic status, affiliation with deviant peers was highlighted as a key factor predisposing youth to law-violating behaviour. In total, 61% of the participants reported coming into conflict with the law whilst in the company of friends, in comparison to 39% of participants who had transgressed on their own (Khan & Singh, 2014: 112). Another study conducted by Van der Merwe and Dawes (2007), was aimed at exploring the risk factors and causal pathways to youth violence in South Africa, based on an analysis of existing literature and empirical data regarding the socio-criminogenic risk factors for youth in conflict with the law. Results from this analysis identified social isolation and affiliation with deviant peers as the two most potent predictors for serious and violent future offending for youth between 12 and 14 years (Van der Merwe & Dawes, 2007: 99).

This correlation between deviant peer association and youth misconduct is also supported by Bender (2010: 469), who asserts that youth who associate more frequently with deviant peers consistently report greater involvement in youth misconduct. Youth offending is also largely motivated by a need for peer approval. In this regard, affiliating with deviant peers provides a platform for youth to gain respect, status and popularity. Furthermore, Bender (2010: 469) notes that youth misconduct is often a learned behaviour (see section 2.5.2.) acquired through contact with social networks such as the family or peer group.

The latter is thus crucial in this regard, as youth tend to gravitate toward peers during adolescence, in search of support, approval, protection and direction (Siegel, 2002: 187). In certain cases, the peer group may also provide a social or emotional basis for law-violating behaviour, creating ample opportunities for youth to transgress, and providing models from which the skills needed to transgress may be acquired. The peer group thus functions as a surrogate family, which provides youth with a sense of belonging, status and respect. In more extreme cases, youth may become part of a criminal gang, as discussed in the following section.

3.3.4.3. Gang membership

As noted in the previous section, youth misconduct and violence often occur in a group context, and associating with deviant peers is to a large extent linked with socially maladaptive behaviour as deviant peers often model and reinforce antisocial or violent behaviour (Lösel & Farrington, 2012: 15, Ntshangase, 2015: 47). However, a distinction should be made between deviant peer association and youth gang membership. According to Siegel (2002: 188), deviant peer association may be a transitory alliance created to perpetrate a specific transgression, whereas gang membership involves a long-lived institution with a distinct structure and organisation, which includes identifiable leadership, a division of labour, rules and rituals. Youth gangs usually also consist of a minimum of three members who fall within a specific age range, typically regarded as 12 to 24 years. Members share some sense of identity, usually symbolised by tattoos, hand gestures and clothing. Some form of permanence within the group is required, with individuals proving their loyalty over time, through the commission of various law violations within the context of the group (Esbensen, 2000; Phillips & Maritz, 2015: 53).

Youth may seek out gangs for several reasons, including protection, power, respect, status, or the belief that membership will lead to the acquisition of financial and material assets. In certain cases, the decision to join a gang is informed and done willingly, while in other cases youth may decide to join due to peer pressure or misguided beliefs. Youth may also join gangs to fulfil their need for belonging, or to gain camaraderie and a sense of self-worth, or to seek solutions to social adjustment issues caused by exposure to risk factors in the family or school context. Despite their motive for joining, gang membership has the potential to drastically increase an individual's risk of coming into conflict with the law, as it requires him/her to adopt the characteristics of the gang, abide by its maladaptive norms, and engage in acts of crime or violence (Pacheco, 2012: 20; Peacock, 2006: 49; Phillips & Maritz, 2015: 53; Prevention of Organised Crime Act, Act 121 of 1998).

Gang membership is often also associated with exposure to the other socio-criminogenic risk factors such as family disorganisation, parental absence, poverty, substance abuse and poor academic achievement (Siegel, 2002: 191). However, countless youth exposed to the aforementioned risk factors may never join a gang,

while a significant number of youth raised in financially and emotionally stable families may. Gangs are also typically characterised according to its dominant activities, which range from violence, to theft, to drug trafficking and turf wars. Subsequently, Siegel (2002: 193) provides the following typology for youth gang-membership:

- I. Members of a *Social Gang* tend to be more interested in social activities, with limited involvement in law violations apart from the persistent use of alcohol and marijuana. However, it should be noted that youth who opt to join a social gang may still be at an increased risk for transgressing due to the detrimental effects associated with illicit substance use (also see section 3.3.2.3.).
- II. A *Party Gang* engages primarily in the drug trade, but forgoes any other criminal behaviour not directly linked to trading in illicit substances. Drug sales are intended to finance each members' personal drug use.
- III. The *Delinquent Gang* commonly participates in more serious law violations, including the illegal acquisition of money and material goods, sexual offences and acts of violence. Delinquent gangs often avoid illicit substance use.
- IV. Members of an *Organised Gang* are comprehensively involved in criminality and commonly engage in drug trafficking. The organised gang often also engages in acts of violence in order to establish control and dominance over drug sale territories.

Youth gangs may also be structured according to size, age range, territory and criminal behaviour. However, Siegel (2002: 194) notes that a significant number of youth gangs are heterogeneous and may fall outside a categorised typology, as its members may engage in various acts of criminality ranging from violent turf war to drug trading. Despite this fluidity and diversity in gang roles and affiliations, Bartollas and Schmalleger (2013: 140) and Siegel (2002: 197) note that gang members typically engage in more unlawful behaviour in comparison to any other youth in the social environment. The offense types reported to be most common among youth gangs in the United States, include theft, aggravated assault and burglary. With regard to youth gang formations in South Africa, the offences commonly include malicious damage to property, vandalism, shoplifting, assault, burglary, rape and murder (Phillips & Maritz, 2015: 61; Siegel, 2002: 197).

According to Phillips and Maritz (2015: 63), South African communities are plagued by an increase in youth gang activity, with particular reference to learners who attend schools which are located in areas rife with gang activity. These learners are often intimidated or victimised whilst at school, compromising their education as schools are sometimes forced to send learners home to ensure their safety. A similar phenomenon was reported by Barnert, et. al. (2015: 1366) based on data from an in-depth analysis of informant interviews, conducted with youth detained in the largest juvenile facility in Los Angeles. The majority of participants in their study described their schools as “unsafe” due to the level of gang activity and bullying present, which in turn led “many youths in their communities to protect themselves by joining gangs, carrying weapons, or avoiding school” (Barnert, et. al., 2015: 1366).

In a separate study conducted by Hawkins, et. al. (2000: 2), a group of 22 researchers spent a period of two years analysing existing empirical evidence on risk factors for youth violence in the United States. The results of this analysis indicated that gang membership by the age of 14 years tripled the risk for involvement in violence by age 18, while gang membership at age 16 more than quadrupled the risk for violence. McCord, et. al. (2001: 83) support these findings by asserting that several studies have demonstrated that gangs facilitate violence, while other studies have found that gang members begin their criminal careers at an earlier age, perpetrate more acts of violence in public spaces and are more likely to use guns in comparison to non-gang members.

Whether in the form of gang membership, deviant peer affiliation or peer rejection, it is apparent that the peer group has the potential to significantly increase the risk of coming into conflict with the law. Based on the predominant risk factors explored in the domain of the family, school, community and peer group; it should be noted that each domain may also play a protective role, and act as a buffer against socio-criminogenic risk factors in other domains. Subsequently, the following section is aimed at highlighting the role of protective factors and briefly reviewing prominent protective factors in each of the aforementioned domains.

3.4. Protective factors

Protective factors are regarded as variables with the potential to reduce the influence of exposure to criminogenic risk factors, and refer to internal or external forces which dissuade the causative processes driven by risk factors. Protective factors also have the potential to inhibit the initial occurrence of criminogenic risk factors. These factors, therefore, interact with various risk factors in order to nullify its effect (Van Staden, 2015: 39). According to Farrington, Ttofi and Piquero (2016: 64) intervention efforts aimed at conflict reduction and building resilience, should not only focus on addressing the socio-criminogenic risks to which youth are exposed, but should also focus on introducing or strengthening protective factors in the context of the family, school, community and peer group.

The latter approach may be more feasible and more attractive to communities, as merely reducing risk factors tends to emphasise deficits and problems, whereas focusing on protective factors implies a more positive approach. Lösel and Farrington (2012: 9) concur, and differentiate between *direct protective* and *buffering protective* factors. Direct protective factors predict a low probability of future conduct problems (i.e. function conversely as a mirror image in comparison to socio-criminogenic risk factors), while buffering protective factors predict a low probability of behavioural misconduct in the presence of criminogenic risk factors (i.e. acts as a buffer which safeguards against exposure to socio-criminogenic risk factors).

Risk and protective factors may also in certain instances refer to the same variable, as one factor may function as both a risk and a protective factor depending on the angle from which it is viewed. For example, a strong level of attachment to a parent or caregiver may be directly protective, however, when youth experience low levels of attachment to a parent or caregiver, it may be regarded as a pertinent risk factor with the potential of increasing an individuals' risk of coming into conflict with the law (Lösel & Farrington, 2012: 9). Several protective factors may be identified in the family, school, community and peer group contexts. The subsequent section is thus aimed at identifying pertinent protective factors in each of these domains.

3.4.1. Protective factors within the family context

As noted previously, the family unit may function as a key factor predisposing youth to come into conflict with the law. Various risk factors including a lack of supervision, low socio-economic status and abuse within the family, may drastically increase the probability for youth misconduct. However, several factors within the context of the family have the potential to safeguard youth from socio-criminogenic risks within the family, as well as other risk factors within the school or community contexts. These protective factors include stable parent-child relationships, prosocial parenting attitudes and behaviours, supportive family relationships and an overall positive climate within the family unit (Barnert, et. al., 2015: 1365; Farrington, et. al., 2016: 66).

According to Lösel and Farrington (2012: 14) “an emotionally positive parent-child relationship, and secure bonding is a basic direct protective factor in child development and has buffering protective effects in preventing a broad range of behaviour problems in the presence of risk factors”. Simões, et. al. (2008: 391) concur and add that a protective family environment should constitute strong attachment and communication, democratic rules and consistent parental supervision over the behaviour of youth. Based on this premise, experiencing a positive relationship with at least one parent or caregiver may encourage positive social learning, and regulate or minimise aggressive or antisocial behaviour. In circumstances where youth are unable to form close bonds with at least one parent, a positive mentor may act as a reference person and diminish the effect of exposure to risk factors within the family (Lösel & Farrington, 2012: 14).

Qualitative data obtained from semi-structured interviews with detained youth, also highlighted the protective role of the family. In the study of Barnert, et. al. (2015: 1366), participants conveyed that the home should ideally function as the most important protective environment. Inversely, most participants described their home environments as “unstructured chaotic places” which were characterised by “fighting” and a “lack of family cohesiveness” (Barnert, et. al., 2015: 1366). Although no generalisations can be made from this qualitative study, several other studies have shown a direct correlation between parenting behaviour and youth aggression or violence. Data obtained from the Pittsburgh Youth Study for instance, indicated that intensive parental supervision, high levels of discipline and child involvement in familial

activities, had a direct protective and buffering protective effect. Firm parenting also improved the behaviour of youth with behavioural problems. Moreover, warm, supportive, norm-orientated and structured childrearing practices were also found to encourage the positive development of youth, and act as a protective buffer in the presence of risk factors for antisocial development (Lösel & Farrington, 2012: 14). A range of protective factors within the domain of the neighbourhood or community may have a similar influence on the development of prosocial behaviour, particularly when protective factors within the family context are compromised. These factors are discussed in the subsequent section.

3.4.2. Protective factors within the community context

It has already been established that neighbourhood conditions such as poverty, unemployment, the availability of illicit substances and high rates of crime or violence in the community have the potential to increase the rate of youth misconduct (see section 3.3.2.). However, the area in which adolescents reside may also serve as an important protective factor. Communities which uphold social values and norms, are characterised by strong kinship bonds and have relatively low crime rates are crucial in this regard. Lösel and Farrington (2012: 16) confirm that 'healthy' communities tend to have a direct protective effect, and that 'non-deprived' communities to a certain degree buffer the impact of impulsivity on youth misconduct. Furthermore, a high level of informal social control and social cohesion are regarded as key factors protecting youth against exposure to various risks within the community.

An ideal community should also make provision for prosocial recreational activities which could occupy time and energy, as well as provide youth with positive role models from which to learn and develop prosocial attitudes and behaviour. However, as a result of risk factors such as gang activity and economic deprivation, many communities may find it challenging to promote social values, or act as positive models from which youth can learn. This may also be a particular challenge in South African communities as many areas are characterised as socially disorganised, with little sense of social cohesion. Arguably, it may also be a challenge to introduce or strengthen protective factors within the community context, as issues such as gang activity, substance abuse and poverty may not be easy to root out, especially when community members view state agencies as unsupportive and unsympathetic to their

plight. Apart from introducing protective factors in the family and community context, a range of protective factors can be introduced or strengthened in the school and peer group contexts, as will be discussed below.

3.4.3. Protective factors in the school context

Pertinent socio-criminogenic risk factors in the domain of the school include poor academic performance or academic failure, an unhealthy school climate uncondusive to learning, poor school ethos, maltreatment by educators and suspension from school (see section 3.3.3.). Inversely, protective factors with regard to the school are centred on good academic performance, positive relationships with educators and peers, high levels of attachment to school and an overall positive school climate (Lösel & Farrington, 2012: 14; Simões, et. al., 2008: 391). The aforementioned factors have both a direct protective, as well as a buffering protective effect in the presence of other socio-criminogenic risks and the exacerbation of criminality.

A study conducted by Herrenkohl, Tajima, Whitney and Huang (2005), examined the protective factors related to antisocial behaviour in youth who had been exposed to physically abusive disciplinary practices. The results of this study indicated that good academic achievement had a buffering protective effect against both acts of violence, as well as antisocial behaviour. Lösel and Farrington (2012: 14) concur, and add that good academic achievement is particularly important in cases where youth are at high-risk of offending due to the presence of risk factors in their family or community. This research is further supported by Hirschi (1969) in his Social Control Theory, which postulates that youth who perform well academically and who are committed to school, would not likely jeopardise the time and energy already invested by engaging in deviant behaviour (see section 2.4.).

However, Lösel and Farrington (2012: 14) note the ambiguity related to the protective influence of good academic achievement or strong attachment to school. The authors demonstrate this ambiguity by stating that academic success may also be regarded as a source of self-efficacy, which may compensate for adverse experiences in other environments. Therefore, good academic achievement and bonds to formal schooling may also be indicative of strong bonds to society, and are thus not necessarily unique to the school environment. It could therefore be argued that criminogenic and protective factors function in a similar manner. Just as the presence of more

criminogenic risk factors creates greater potential to engage in law-violating behaviour, so too does the presence of more protective factors create a stronger buffer against exposure to criminogenic risks. Similarly, just as risk factors are interdependent, so too are the influence of protective factors (Bezuidenhout, 2013: 70; Hawkins, et. al., 2000: 7; Shader, 2001: 4).

According to Lösel and Farrington (2012: 15) “longitudinal intervention studies on anti-bullying programs have shown that intensive supervision, clear behaviour rules, consistent negative reinforcement of aggression, engagement of parents and teachers, and other characteristics of a positive school/class climate are relevant for reducing violence at school”. It could thus be argued that a reduction in violent behaviour whilst at school, would also transcend into other domains and create more positive behavioural patterns within the contexts of the family, community and peer group.

3.4.4. Protective factors within the peer group context

As noted previously (see section 3.3.4.), peer networks and relations are developmentally significant in the lives of youth and young adults as individuals tend to be more open to the influence of peer groups during adolescence. In this regard, the role of the peer group may be emphasised as both a pertinent risk factor, and as a prominent protective factor (Bazon & Estevão, 2012: 1158; Lachman, Roman & Cahill, 2013: 212).

Simões, et. al. (2008: 391) affirm that peers’ positive attitudes regarding crime indicates a clear risk for antisocial behaviour. However, affiliating with non-deviant peers, or with a peer group who disapprove of socially unacceptable behaviour, may serve as a key protective factor in the peer group context. Positive peer affiliation also has both a direct protective effect against socially maladaptive behaviour, and a buffering protective effect against violent behaviour for youth exposed to socio-criminogenic risks (Lösel & Farrington, 2012: 15). The positive potential of affiliating with non-deviant peers is also highlighted in the qualitative analysis of Barnert, et. al. (2015: 1368). Both male and female participants in the study reported that male youth often have a tendency to exhibit a “macho” persona whilst in the presence of deviant peers. This pressure to live up to the “male role” may subsequently promote or reinforce antisocial behaviour which includes engaging in physical confrontations,

theft, gangbanging and drug or firearm possession and use. The research of Burton and Marshall (2005: 50) support the findings of Barnert, et. al. (2015: 1368) by noting the importance of non-parental individuals such as peers, who are also able to act as positive role models, supportive of prosocial behaviour and activities. Associating with peers who support and engage in conventional behaviour, is also particularly important to youth who are not fortunate enough to have a positive adult role model in their lives.

Forming and sustaining relationships with peers who promote and encourage prosocial behaviour, also has the potential to promote the development of appropriate social skills necessary for every individual's psychosocial adjustment. This includes the development of relevant communication skills, as well as the proficiency to resolve interpersonal and external conflict without resorting to aggression or violence (Bazon & Estevão, 2012: 1157). Additionally, friendship networks may also provide a meaningful escape from other negative aspects in one's life, as youth may seek out peers as a mechanism to circumvent the adverse conditions in their family or community (Lachman, et. al., 2013: 213). Subsequently, forming strong attachment to positive peers may function both as a platform for youth to develop prosocial skills, and as a way to reinforce socially acceptable behaviour as conforming peers can act as role models.

3.5. Conclusion

The focus of this chapter was to discuss the relevant literature and past research findings regarding socio-criminogenic risk factors for youth misconduct, based on factors which come to the fore in the family, community, school and peer group contexts. The literature revealed that youth in conflict with the law form a heterogeneous population which become susceptible to engage in law-violating behaviour due to their exposure to an array of socio-criminogenic risks present in the aforementioned social domains. Moreover, the literature revealed that exposure to a sole risk factor may not be sufficient to influence behaviour, but that exposure to a myriad of risk factors, especially from various domains, have a greater influence on the behaviour of youth. The value of introducing and strengthening protective factors, should also be emphasised as these protective factors may be crucial for efficiently addressing the phenomenon of youth in conflict with the law.

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH EXPECTATIONS

Considering the theoretical and empirical perspectives exploring the relationship between socio-criminogenic risk factors and youth misconduct with reference to both the international and domestic literature presented in the foregoing chapter, it is apparent that more research on this phenomenon is required to make more reliable and informed conclusions. As a plethora of socio-criminogenic risk factors were found to be associated with youth misconduct both internationally and in South Africa, it becomes necessary to provide personal accounts of the unique experiences related to the exposure to socio-criminogenic risk factors, so as to gain a better understanding of this phenomenon, particularly to initiate further research focusing on conflict reduction. Using the information presented, this explorative chapter aims to present research expectations that will be utilised for the purpose of fulfilling the aims of the study as outlined in Chapter 1 (see section 1.6.).

4.1. Research Expectation 1: The majority of participants in this study who report exposure to socio-criminogenic risk factors within the family domain will report the following as risk factors which contributed to their behavioural misconduct:

- 4.1.1. Socio-economic disadvantage within the family unit.
- 4.1.2. Family conflict and interpersonal violence.
- 4.1.3. Inadequate parental supervision.
- 4.1.4. Parental and sibling deviance.

The family environment is significantly associated with youth misconduct as a myriad of risk factors including parental deviance, socio-economic disadvantage, illicit substance abuse and interpersonal conflict all have the potential to negatively affect socialisation, subsequently increasing the risk for youth to come into conflict with the law (Arthur, 2007: 7; Bezuidenhout, 2013: 75; Hawkins, et. al., 2000: 3; McCord, et. al., 2001: 75; Ntshangase, 2015: 38; Shader, 2001: 6; Siegel, 2002: 158). Whether from a Strain perspective such as Merton (1938: 673), a Differential Opportunity perspective such as Cloward and Ohlin (1960: 86), a Social Control perspective such as Hirschi (1969: 10), or a Social Learning perspective such as Bandura (1977), family life is of crucial importance with regard to adequate socialisation and the reduction of

conflict. Subsequently, youth are placed at significant risk of transgressing when reared in families which are disrupted as a result of spousal or interpersonal conflict, negligent caregivers who are not attuned to the behaviour or emotional state of youth, or families where caregivers themselves contravene the law. Bartollas and Schmallegger (2013: 103) further highlight the importance of exploring conditions within the family in order to comprehend why youth transgress, by noting that “Social Disorganisation theories, Subcultural theories, Social Control theories and Life-Course theories all have this emphasis”.

The role of the family as a pertinent predictor for youth misconduct has also been emphasised in various studies including the research of Hay, et. al. (2007: 596), Khan and Singh (2014: 112) and Rekker, et. al. (2015: 2) which highlighted socio-economic disadvantage; Arthur (2007: 21), Farrington, et. al. (1996: 47) and Howitt (2015: 75) which affirmed the detrimental effect of parent/sibling criminality; Spatz-Widom (1989: 162), Burton (2007: 19) and Clark (2012: 83) which emphasise family conflict and interpersonal violence; Arthur (2007: 17), Hawkins, et. al. (2000: 4) and Wedge, et. al. (2000: 32) which affirm the harmful impact of being reared in a structurally non-intact family; and Chaiken (2000: 7) and Harris (2009: 44) who highlight inadequate parental supervision as a crucial factor associated with youth misconduct.

4.2. Research Expectation 2: The majority of participants in this study who report exposure to socio-criminogenic risk factors within the community domain will report the following as risk factors which contributed to their law-violating behaviour.

4.2.1. Positively orientated civic attitudes and beliefs regarding unlawfulness.

4.2.2. Social disorganisation within their community.

4.2.3. The abuse of illicit substances.

McCord, et. al. (2001: 89) note that the community or neighbourhood may have a significant influence on the behaviour of youth as the risk of contravening the law exponentially increases when residing in an adverse or unfavourable environment. Hoffman (2006: 869) substantiates this by affirming that youth are more likely to come into conflict with the law when residing in areas characterised by poverty, female-headed households and ethnic heterogeneity, as these features generally denote a

socially disorganised environment characterised by defective socialisation and supervision, weak kinship bonds, fewer positive role models and limited opportunities for conventional success.

From a strain perspective, youth residing in communities such as these would have limited access to the socially approved means needed to achieve conventional success and may thus be more susceptible to engage in law-violating behaviour by opting to adapt to the strain experienced through becoming innovative and using socially unacceptable/unlawful means in their pursuit for success (Merton, 1938: 676). According to Hirschi (1969: 10; 2002: 16) youth residing in unfavourable environments characterised by anomie, may also be more likely to come into conflict with the law as these youth would experience weaker bonds to the social order with reference to their level of attachment to conventional adults/social institutions, their level of commitment and involvement in prosocial activities and their level of belief in social norms and rules. Youth residing in socially disorganised communities with limited access to legitimate opportunities, a lack of prosocial leisure activities, high crime-rates, gang membership, limited support structures, or where illicit substances are abused may also be more vulnerable to engage in transgressions as these negative environmental conditions may form part of their social learning processes (Louw, et. al., 2005: 55; Siegel, 2004: 156).

The detrimental effect which the environment or community may have on the behaviour of youth is also affirmed by the research of Ntshangase (2015: 36) which demonstrates that unfavourable living environments provide youth with optimal opportunities to transgress, and with sufficient models from which to acquire the skills needed to successfully contravene the law. The relationship between youth misconduct and conditions within the community is further supported by the research of Barnert, et. al. (2015: 1368), Bartol and Bartol (2017: 490), Benekos and Merlo (2009: 85), Bezuidenhout (2013: 75), Kawachi, et. al. (1999: 724), Kaylen and Pridemore (2013: 907), Madu and Matla (2003: 122) and Williams (2008: 273), in which poverty, community disorganisation, illicit substance abuse and positively orientated attitudes towards crime and violence were highlighted as pertinent socio-criminogenic risk factors within the community.

4.3. Research Expectation 3: The majority of participants in this study who report exposure to socio-criminogenic risk factors within the school domain will report the following as risk factors which contributed to their behavioural misconduct:

- 4.3.1. Poor academic performance.
- 4.3.2. Weak levels of attachment to school.
- 4.3.3. Truancy.
- 4.3.4. Dropping out of school.

As noted previously, the school is often regarded as one of the most important social institutions with regard to the moral and cognitive development of youth. Ideally, schools should have the capacity to impart social norms and values in response to the demands of conformity imposed by society, endorse and advance societal needs, and impart relevant knowledge and skills in order to prepare learners for the 'adult' role (Ntshangase, 2015: 41). However, schooling systems particularly in developing countries such as South Africa, are not always capable of fulfilling the roles outlined above and in this regard may become a vital risk factor with reference to youth misconduct (Bezuidenhout, 2013: 138). Learners may become particularly susceptible to engage in law-violating behaviour when the schooling system is characterised by conditions such as poor academic achievement, low levels of attachment to school, school-based violence, harsh disciplinary measures, or a general lack of discipline (De Souza da Silveira, et. al., 2012: 353; Hawkins, et. al., 2000: 5; McCord, et. al., 2001: 83; O'Mahony, 2009: 101; Shader, 2001: 4).

This is supported by Merton (1938: 677) who asserts that youth may adapt to strain by accepting social goals, but rejecting the socially approved means with which to achieve these goals. The school may thus be regarded as a pathway to youth misconduct with reference to utilising illegitimate means in the pursuit of goal attainment as factors such as academic failure may lead to youth experiencing status frustration, becoming detached from school, or becoming demotivated to attend school. In turn, this could lead to low levels of attachment to school, neutralising the effectiveness of the school to function as a secondary socialisation agent. In addition, academic failure, truancy, suspension and dropping out of school may lead to restricted access to legitimate employment opportunities, thereby increasing the

probability of youth to seek out illegal avenues to success. Hirschi (1969: 16) affirms this by noting that weak levels of attachment to social institutions such as the school, and a lack of commitment or involvement in prosocial activities offered by schools or in the community, generally weaken or disrupt an individuals' bond to social norms and values, subsequently increasing their risk to transgress. Based on Bandura's (1977) Social Learning perspective, the behaviour of youth may also be negatively affected when witnessing or experiencing school-based violence or abuse, as youth may become desensitised to violence or mimic these behaviours in other social contexts (Louw & Edwards, 2004: 267; Louw, et. al., 2005: 60; Siegel, 2004: 156).

The relationship between socio-criminogenic risk factors experienced within the school context and the subsequent risk for youth to transgress have also been noted in the research of Bartol and Bartol (2017: 59), Barnert, et. al. (2015: 1365), Khan and Singh (2014: 111) and Sutherland (2011: 1) in which academic failure, truancy and dropping out of school were highlighted as pertinent risk factors for youth misconduct. Further evidence supporting the detrimental effect of conditions within the school on the susceptibility for youth to transgress is found in the research of Ntshangase (2015: 42), Christle, et. al. (2005: 70), Harris (2009: 46) and Clark (2012: 82) in which poor school ethos, suspension from school, school-based violence and maltreatment by educators, were highlighted as significant risk factors increasing the propensity for youth to come into conflict with the law.

4.4. Research Expectation 4: The majority of participants in this study who report exposure to socio-criminogenic risk factors within the peer group domain will report the following as risk factors which contributed to their law-violating behaviour.

4.4.1. Attachment to deviant peers.

4.4.2. Gang membership.

The peer group has the potential to be a unique and dominant agent promoting maladaptive behaviour as "factors such as peer delinquent behaviour, peer approval of delinquent behaviour, attachment or allegiance to peers, time spent with peers, and peer pressure for deviance have all been associated with adolescent antisocial behaviour" (McCord, et. al., 2001: 80). This is supported by several theoretical perspectives including the Social Control, Subculture and Social Learning

perspectives. In this regard, Hirschi (1969) argues that behaviour is generally congruent amongst friends and that attachment to deviant peers may break down the level of social control exerted by families, schools and communities by providing youth with optimal opportunities to transgress, a platform to achieve status through contravening the law, and negative role models who could reinforce or rationalise law-violating behaviour. In addition, Cloward and Ohlin (1960) assert that gang membership or involvement in deviant subcultures increase the vulnerability of youth to come into conflict with the law as illegitimate activities could be reinforced in the context of the peer group, decreasing the effectiveness of the family and school to adequately socialise youth. Bandura (1977) concurs, and adds that the socialisation process of youth may be negatively affected by joining antisocial peer groups as youth may become desensitised to maladaptive behaviours, mimic the behaviour displayed by peers, or learn to associate unlawful behaviour with social rewards.

Several empirical studies (Barnert, et. al., 2015; Dishion, et. al., 2004; Harder, et. al., 2015; Khan & Singh, 2014) have also highlighted antisocial peer group association as a pertinent contributing factor for youth misconduct. A positive correlation between involvement with deviant peers, gang membership, and attachment to antisocial peers have also been established in the research of McCord, et. al. (2001), Monahan, et. al. (2009) and Peacock (2006). Burfeind and Bartusch (2006: 425) concur, and add that youth who transgress in a group context, generally violate the law more frequently and also perpetrate more serious transgressions in comparison to youth acting on their own. Youth misconduct is also to a large extent motivated by the need for peer approval. Thus, affiliation with deviant peers provide youth with a platform to gain respect, to achieve status, gain popularity/notoriety, and to experience a sense of belonging which may be absent from the family or school environments (Bender, 2010: 469).

4.5. Research Expectation 5: The majority of youth in this study who have been exposed to socio-criminogenic risk factors will report experiencing a combination of risk factors from different domains as opposed to a single risk factor from one domain.

Socio-criminogenic risk factors, and in particular behaviours such as illicit substance abuse, academic failure and sexual promiscuity are interrelated, and involvement in

one form of maladaptive behaviour is generally indicative of some participation in other socially undesirable behaviours (Bartollas & Schmallegger, 2013: 5). Bezuidenhout (2013: 70) and Shader (2001: 4) concur, and assert that socio-criminogenic risk factors are co-dependent, meaning that a risk factor presenting in one domain (i.e. the family) would have a high probability of affecting behaviour in another domain (i.e. the school). This notion is supported by the Integrated Social Process perspective of Elliott, Ageton and Canter (1979) who propose two dominant pathways to youth misconduct. The first is exemplified by weak integration into and commitment to social norms and values, and by the involvement in deviant peer groups. The second pathway is based on initially strong bonds to social norms and values, the subsequent weakening of these bonds and exposure/commitment to antisocial peer groups. Furthermore, this model assumes that youth have different socialisation experiences, which may lead to varying degrees of commitment and integration into conventional social groupings (see section 2.6.).

Hence, it could be argued that youth reared in communities where violence is rife may become desensitised to aggression, thus viewing violence as a norm or as an acceptable way of resolving disputes or reaching social goals. This may then spill over into the school, family or peer group context, and the individual may subsequently utilise violence and aggression to resolve disputes with peers/siblings or to gain status. Individuals would then fail to conform to cultural norms and values, consequently creating anomie within society.

A similar argument could be made with reference to socio-criminogenic risk factors occurring in all four domains, i.e. exposure to risk factors in the peer group could influence the way an individual behaves in the family, school or community context and vice versa. It is also important to note that the presence of any one risk factor is not always sufficient to produce law-violating behaviour. However, the greater the number of risk factors present, the more significant the effect on behaviour will be (Hawkins, et. al., 2000: 7). The research of Harder, et. al. (2015: 1059) and Loeber, et. al. (2008: 147) concur with the findings of Hawkins, et. al. (2000: 7) by demonstrating a greater likelihood for individuals to develop serious deviant behaviour when more risk factors are present, as opposed to the presence of only one or two risk factors.

CHAPTER 5: RESEARCH DESIGN

Considering the information presented thus far, a number of aspects associated with exposure to socio-criminogenic risk factors should be quite apparent. Youth are subjected to a wide range of risk factors which may increase their propensity to transgress. Furthermore, a significant number of youth have already been negatively affected by challenges which include but are not limited to, socio-economic disadvantage, familial abuse, community disorganisation, inadequate schooling and gang membership. An equally high percentage of youth have also been incarcerated for serious transgressions as a result of exposure to various socio-criminogenic risk factors experienced within the family, school, community and peer group context. These youth therefore face a myriad of challenges in terms of both their transition into adulthood, as well as on their journey to becoming meaningful social actors.

Although some research on the risk factors influencing behaviour has been conducted, much of it pertains to the international context and a limited number of studies pertaining to the domestic situation is available. There also exists a dearth of research related to the unique experiences of youth who are confronted by various socio-criminogenic risk factors in their peer group, family, school or community environments. Against this background and based on the research expectations presented in the foregoing chapter, the current chapter delineates the research design utilised in this study.

The term *research design* refers to the techniques and procedures a researcher selects to study a particular phenomenon, and is used as a 'blueprint' or guideline encompassing aspects related to the way in which the study is to be carried out in the field (Bayens & Roberson, 2011: 24; De Vos, Strydom, Fouché & Delport, 2011: 308). This chapter therefore outlines the framework for the current study and begins with a discussion of the research methodology, followed by an overview of the research area, data collection procedure, data collection instrument, research population and sampling method. Thereafter, the pilot study, sample description, data analysis technique and ethical considerations are presented and explained.

5.1. Research methodology

A qualitative research methodology was utilised for the purposes of this study. Qualitative research generally reflects a historical, intuitive or observational approach (Hagan, 2010: 14), and is defined by Creswell (2014: 32) and Neuman (2000: 17) as the systematic analysis of socially meaningful action through the direct observation of people in their natural settings in order to explore and understand the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. Kvale (1996:70) concurs by noting that this approach permits researchers to gain an 'insider perspective' as people are studied in terms of their own unique meanings and definitions of the world. In its broadest sense, the qualitative research paradigm "elicits participant accounts of meaning, experience or perceptions" and "produces descriptive data in the participants own written or spoken words" (De Vos, et. al., 2011: 65). Qualitative research designs can thus be regarded as instrumental when attempting to understand the meaning participants ascribe to their own actions or behaviour (Harris, 2009: 89).

The current study is aimed at exploring the socio-criminogenic risk factors which may motivate youth to come into conflict with the law, in order to gain a better understanding of the unique factors which youth attribute to their law-violating behaviour. Due to this emphasis on the personal experiences of the participants, a qualitative research approach was the most applicable for this study as this approach is more likely to extract deeper meanings related to specific human experiences, and to produce theoretically richer observations which are not easily reduced to numbers (Rubin & Babbie, 2017: 69).

Furthermore, this study employed research strategies which were exploratory and descriptive in nature. Explorative research largely facilitates the generation of new information and is often used when conducting a preliminary investigation, the objective being to identify important issues and key variables in order to gain a better understanding of a phenomenon, community, individual or social setting (De Vos, et. al., 2011: 95; Maree, 2016: 55). An explorative approach was thus suitable for the current study as the aim was to gain new information and insight into the socio-criminogenic risk factors which contribute to youth misconduct, based on the experiences of the participants in the sample.

Although explorative studies are geared towards gaining insight and comprehension, they may not always be descriptive enough, and for this reason a descriptive strategy was also utilised in this study. Descriptive research generally provides an 'in-depth' description of a particular social event, individual or group, and may range from a narrative description to a highly structured statistical analysis. This approach is also more organised than explorative research and is centred on the collection of rich data, which could potentially inform accurate descriptions of the phenomena to be studied (Babbie & Mouton, 2003: 80; Maree, 2016: 54). A descriptive strategy was thus followed in the current study in order to gain an in-depth understanding and accurate description of the most pertinent socio-criminogenic risk factors which motivated youth in the sample to come into conflict with the law. The following sections provide an outline of the research area, data collection method and data collection instrument.

5.2. Research area

This study was conducted with the assistance of the Department of Correctional Services (DCS) South Africa, a governmental department responsible for the detention, safe custody, rehabilitation and reintegration of individuals convicted for contravening the law, and sentenced to a period of direct incarceration. Permission to conduct the study was obtained by the Head of the Policy Coordination and Research Division of the DCS (Appendix 6), and subsequently the study was carried out at the Kimberley Youth Development Centre, the juvenile section of the Kimberley Correctional Centre in the Northern Cape Province. The aim and purpose of the study was communicated to the area and unit managers respectively, as well as to the correctional officials and social workers assigned to the centre. A certificate of consent (Appendix 3) was signed by the unit manager and the recruitment of research participants could now progress.

5.3. Data Collection Method

After permission to conduct the study was obtained, twenty detained male youth (aged 18 – 22 years) who could read, write and speak English and/or Afrikaans were selected to participate. Participants were informed of the purpose and aims of the study as outlined in the information sheet (Appendix 2) and were given the opportunity to withdraw from the study during any phase in the research. Informed consent forms (Appendix 4) were also signed and collected from each of the participants. The

informed consent forms were the only forms on which participants' names were recorded in order to ensure confidentiality.

Data for this study was collected by means of individual in-depth semi-structured interviews with the aid of an interview schedule (Appendix 1). On average, each interview took approximately 60 minutes to complete. According to De Vos, et. al. (2011: 342) "interviewing is the predominant mode of data or information collection in qualitative research" as qualitative research interviews attempt "to understand the world from the participant's point of view, to unfold the meaning of people's experiences, and to uncover their lived world prior to scientific explanations". Semi-structured interviews were thus the preferred method of data collection for this study as it allowed the researcher to gain a greater understanding of the potentially detrimental influence of exposure to socio-criminogenic risk factors on behaviour from the direct perspective of the participants, and because it facilitated the gathering of information through the observation of non-verbal cues.

Moreover, the use of semi-structured interviews promoted a degree of flexibility and structure with regard to the data collection process as the researcher was able to probe and explore interesting avenues which emerged during the interview, enabling participants' to provide a more holistic picture of their experiences and views related to the influence of various socio-criminogenic risk factors on behaviour (De Vos, et. al., 2011: 351). Prior to concluding each interview, the participants were encouraged to raise any questions or concerns they may have had regarding the study. The researcher was also available throughout the course of the interview process which lasted 12 days, in the event that participant's had questions or concerns after they had completed their respective interview.

5.3.1. The semi-structured interview as a data collection instrument

Due to the exploratory nature of this study and because personal experiences often cannot be reduced to quantifiable information or statistics, the utilisation of in-depth semi-structured interviews allowed the research participants to fully express their views and experiences regarding their exposure to socio-criminogenic risk factors which motivate youth misconduct. In order to meet the objectives of the study (see section 1.6.), the interview schedule was centred on i) identifying the socio-criminogenic risk factors to which participants had been exposed, ii) exploring each

participants' unique experiences and views with reference to their exposure to socio-criminogenic risk factors within the family, community, school and peer group domains and iii) identifying prominent recurrent clusters of socio-criminogenic risk factors reported by the majority of participants in the sample.

Subsequently, the interview schedule covered five main categories which included a) biographic characteristics, b) family variables, c) community variables, d) school variables and e) peer group variables. A more detailed exposition of each of the aforementioned sections is outlined below:

a) Biographic characteristics

Questions included in this section served to capture data essential to describe the sample. Amongst others, relevant aspects included chronological age, ethnicity and hobbies/interests. Additional questions were related to the participant's offence history, current transgression, the sentence imposed and the proportion of the sentence which they had already served. This section consisted of ten questions.

b) Family variables

This section referred to family structures and systems, and consisted of 23 questions aimed at identifying and exploring various socio-criminogenic risk factors within the family domain. More specifically questions in this section were related to the socio-economic status of the participant's family, illicit substance abuse within the family, the degree of familial attachment, instances of verbal or physical abuse, the degree of parental supervision received, and other distinct challenges experienced within the family unit.

c) Community variables

To explore potential risk factors within the community domain, questions were formulated focussing on particular challenges experienced within the community context. More specifically, socio-economic conditions, crime-rates, gang membership, the availability and abuse of alcohol/illicit substances, the level of community organisation and the level of attachment to the community were explored in this section. This section consisted of 19 questions.

d) School variables

Questions included in this section served to explore participants' experiences and views relating to risk factors within the school context. A series of 13 questions were formulated focussing on each participant's level of attachment and motivation to attend school, their academic performance, conditions within the school and unique challenges related to the schooling environment. More specifically, questions centred on the availability and use of illicit substances whilst at school, the incidence and prevalence of violence or bullying on the school premises, as well as the engagement in gang-related activities in and around the school.

e) Peer group variables

This section referred to participants' peer relationships, with a specific focus on deviant peer-affiliation and gang membership. Questions formulated in this section were thus aimed at exploring the participant's level of attachment to deviant peers, the ways in which leisure time with peers was spent and the degree of affiliation with peers who are members of a criminal gang. This section consisted of eight questions.

f) Conclusion of the interview

Three questions were included in this section which served to explore the most pertinent socio-criminogenic risk factors experienced by the participants, as well as to identify any possible recurrent clusters of risk factors amongst participants in the sample. The final question on the interview schedule was related to specific qualities which participants identified as their most positive attributes.

5.4. Research population and sampling method

Due to practical limitations it was not possible to collect a random sample of all youth detained at South African correctional centres. Even if a random sample within a single correctional centre were to be obtained, it would only yield randomly obtained data applicable to youth detained at that particular centre and would not be representative or generalisable to the universe of incarcerated youth in South Africa. Purposive sampling was therefore used as this sampling method enabled the creation of an operational population, i.e. a population constructed in such a manner that it represents the ideal (Bless & Higson-Smith, 1995: 95; Bryman, Bell, Hirschsohn, Dos

Santos, Du Toit, Masenge, Van Aardt & Wagner, 2014: 186; Wagner, Kawulich & Garner, 2012: 93).

Purposive or *judgemental* sampling is categorised as a non-probability sampling technique which facilitates the selection of a sample based on a knowledge of the research population, its elements and the nature of the research aims. In other words, participants are selected based on the researcher's judgement, the participants' knowledge or experience of a specific phenomenon, as well as the purpose of the study (Babbie & Mouton, 2003: 166). Hence, the research population was selected based on their suitability to the topic and purpose of the study, which was to explore and gain a greater understanding of the socio-criminogenic risk factors associated with youth misconduct based on the unique experiences of the participants themselves.

Subsequently, twenty convicted males between the ages of 18 and 22 years, detained at the Kimberley Youth Development Centre were selected to participate in the study as the research site only made provision for male youth, the majority of existing literature and empirical studies pertain to males, and because the majority of correctional clients constitute this demographic variable. The requirements for participation in the study thus included that the participants be male (based on the aforementioned rationale), that they be between the ages of 18 and 22 years as individuals in this age group form part of a 'high-risk' age cohort for both contravening the law and for criminal victimisation (see section 1.1.), and that the participants be fluent in English/Afrikaans for the purposes of the administration of the data collection instrument.

Based on this criteria, a total of 79 males between the ages of 18 and 22 years were invited to a venue made available by the Kimberley Youth Development Centre, and the purpose and aims of the research as outlined in the information sheet (Appendix 2) was explained. Potential participants were then given an opportunity to ask questions and clear up any uncertainties before deciding whether to participate. A total of 24 participants indicated their willingness to participate. However, four participants withdrew during the course of the data collection procedure due to obligations related to the attendance of rehabilitation programmes at the centre. Subsequently, the remaining twenty participants were included in the sample. Before embarking on the

full-scale project, a pilot or feasibility study was conducted. An exposition of this specific phase of the study is presented in the succeeding section.

5.5. Pilot Study

Prior to piloting the data collection instrument with five participants from the sample population, the interview schedule was piloted with two personnel members at the Kimberley Youth Development Centre whom had been employed for one year and three years respectively. Both personnel members asserted that they had engaged in frequent discussions with youth detained at the centre, and were thus able to validate the feasibility of the interview schedule as a means with which to collect the required data. A pilot study was then performed based on semi-structured interviews with five participants from the sample in order to further test the feasibility of the research methodology. This allowed for any unforeseen pitfalls or challenges to be identified and managed before embarking on the full-scale research project (De Vos, et. al., 2011: 73).

Due to the exploratory nature of the study, the pilot study was also utilised to assess the administration of the interview schedule by conducting it under the same conditions as the full-scale project. Participants were therefore welcomed and informed of the purpose and aims of the research, and were reminded that participation was entirely voluntary and that they had the right to withdraw at any phase during the interview. It was also highlighted that questions were welcome if the participant experienced any confusion during the course of the interview, so that further explanation could be provided.

Upon completion of the pilot study, the viability of the interview schedule as a means with which to collect the required data was affirmed and none of the items on the interview schedule required changing. However, it became apparent that the meaning of a few questions needed to be clarified.

These questions are outlined below:

- I. Economic disadvantage/deprivation (Section B, Question 5) was determined to refer to financial challenges or hardship, and included participants' perception of living in poverty or experiencing difficulties in meeting their basic or other needs.

- II. General concern about well-being (Section B, Question 11) was explained to participants as the experience or awareness of the family caring for them and for what would or could become of them.
- III. Parental supervision (Section B, Question 16) was determined to refer to the amount of time that a parent or other responsible adult monitored their behaviour and leisure-time activities, or looked after them.
- IV. After-school supervision (Section C, Question 14.3) was explained to participants' as referring to the amount of time that a parent or other responsible adult monitored their behaviour and leisure-time activities upon returning home from school.
- V. Altercation (Section D, Question 11.3) was determined to refer to any form of conflict such as an argument or fight.

With these explanations included and managed during the pilot study, it was established that the data obtained from the five participants were of high enough quality to be included in the final study. The following section provides a detailed description of the sample population.

5.6. Description of sample

The following discussion focuses on further attributes of the sample, namely chronological age distribution, ethnic characteristics and the highest level of education attained by the participants. Furthermore, this section includes frequency distribution tables of the most recent transgression/s committed, the length of sentence imposed and the amount of time participants' had spent incarcerated. Table 6 illustrates the chronological age distribution of participants in the sample.

Table 6
Chronological age distribution of participants in the sample

Age	Number (N)	Percentage %
18 Years	0	0
19 Years	3	15
20 Years	7	35
21 Years	7	35
22 Years	3	15
Total	20	100

The majority of the research participants (70%) were between the ages of 20 and 21 years, while three participants (15%) were 19 years old and three participants (15%) were 22 years old. The average age of the sample was 20.5 years. None of the participants were 18 years old, as youth in this age group may possibly have been diverted as per the directives issued by the *National Director of Public Prosecutions* as outlined in the Child Justice Act 75 of 2008 (see section 1.4.2.1.). Table 7 presents the ethnic group distribution of the participants.

Table 7
Ethnic group distribution of participants in the sample

Ethnicity	Number (N)	Percentage %
African	15	75
White	0	0
Coloured	5	25
Other	0	0
Total	20	100

The majority of the participants (75%) identified as African, while the remaining participants (25%) identified as Coloured. Language followed a similar pattern as the most common language used was English (65%), followed by Afrikaans (35%). The highest level of education attained by the participants is graphically presented in Figure 5 below.

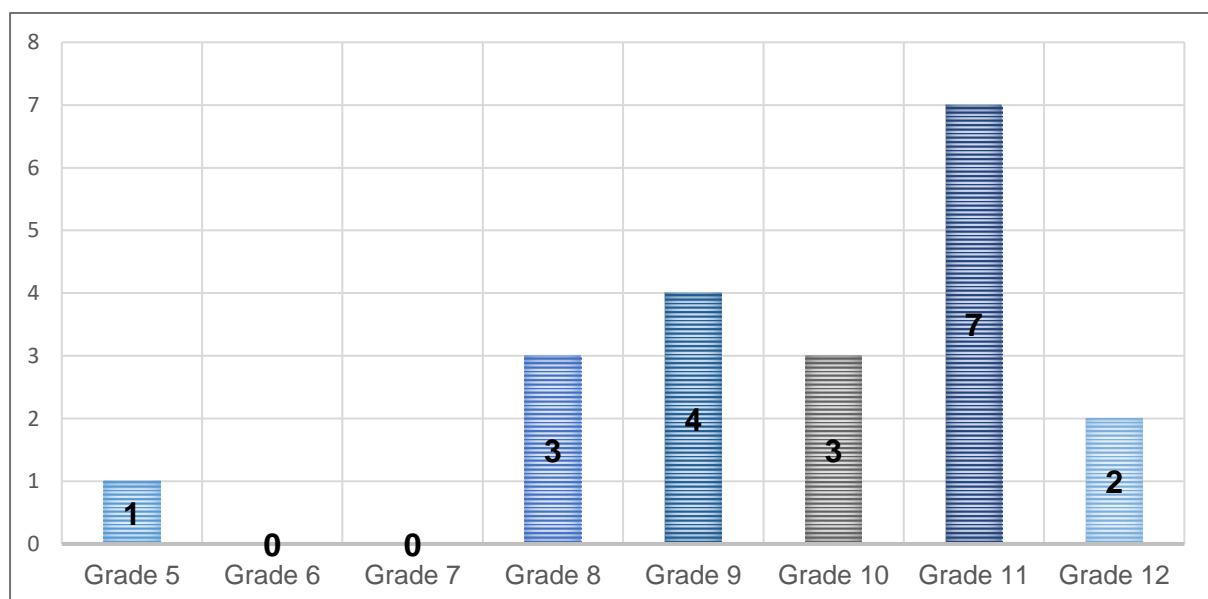


Figure 5: *Highest level of education attained by participants*

Concerning the level of education of the research participants, the majority (35%) had completed school up to Grade 11, followed by Grade 9 (20%), Grade 8 (15%) and Grade 10 (15%) respectively. Two participants (10%) had completed their schooling career prior to coming into conflict with the law, while one participant (5%) left school in Grade 6. The following four figures present the participants' offence information, including the number of participants who have come into conflict with the law for the first time (Figure 6), the nature of their most recent transgression (Figure 7), the length of sentence imposed (Figure 8) and the time already spent incarcerated (Figure 9).

In accordance with the classification system of the Department of Correctional Services, the nature or type of transgressions for which participants are presently incarcerated can be grouped into five categories, namely aggressive, economic, sexual, narcotics-related and other offences. As highlighted in Chapter 1 (see section 1.1.), the 'other' category refers to social fabric crimes such as public intoxication or the possession of an unlicensed firearm (Peacock, 2006: 90). Figure 6 presents the percentage of participants who have come into conflict with the law for the first time. With regard to those participants who have transgressed prior to the current offence, an exposition of the nature of the previous transgression/s are also provided.

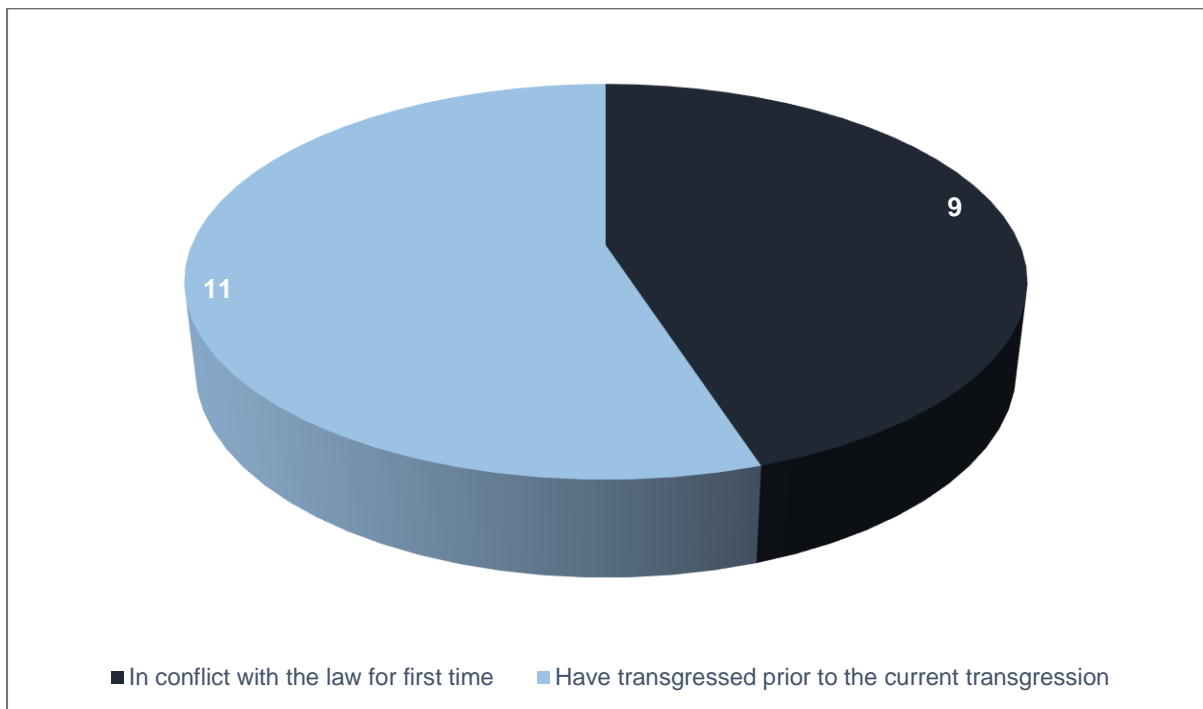


Figure 6: *Participants who have come into conflict with the law for the first time*

Nine participants (45%) reported that the current offence was their first transgression, while the largest proportion of participants (N=11) in the current study had come into conflict with the law prior to their most recent transgression. The most commonly recorded past offences were economic (35.8%) and aggressive offences (35.8%) respectively. One participant (7.1%) reported having committed a sexual offence, while another participant (7.1%) had been convicted of an offence pertaining to the 'other' category. Two participants (14.2%) did not provide any information on their prior offences. The crime category and nature of the offence for which participants are currently serving a sentence is presented in Figure 7 below.

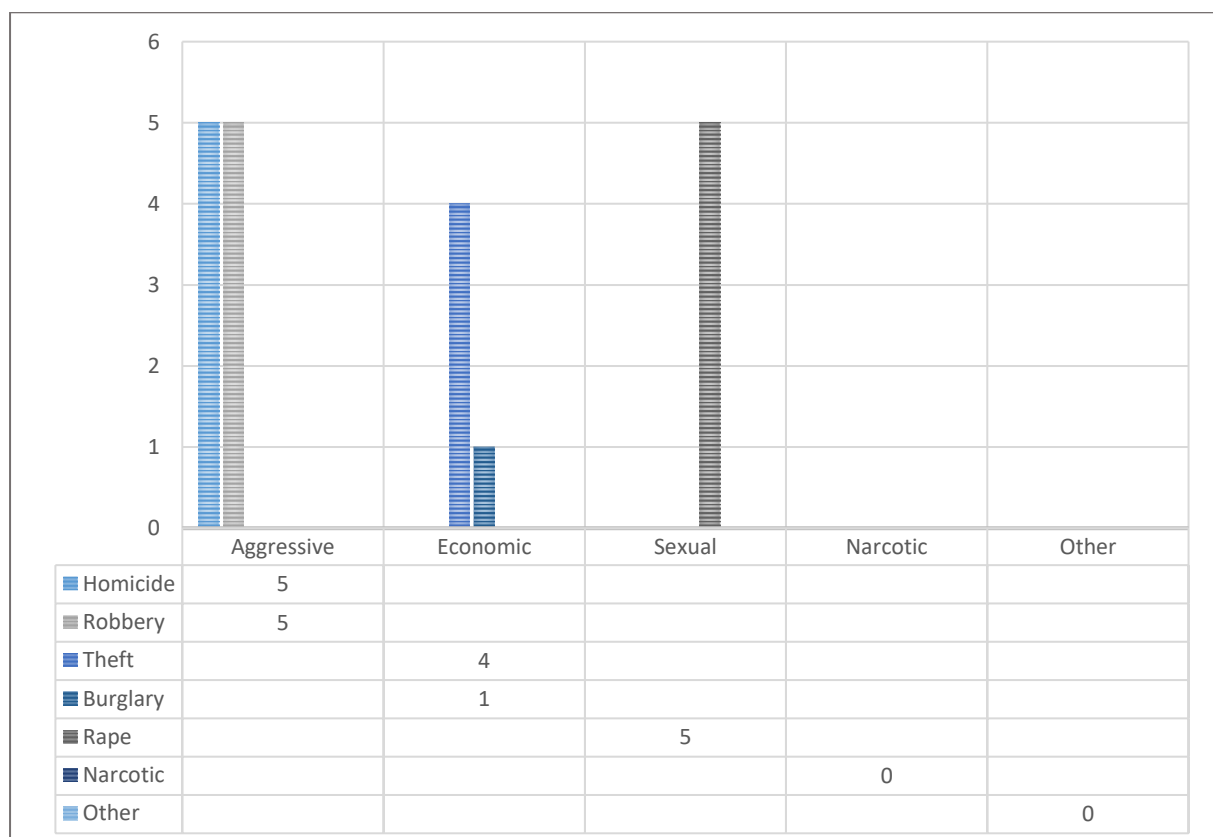


Figure 7: *Offence categories and nature of most recent transgression*

From Figure 7 it is apparent that the majority of participants (50%) are currently serving a sentence for aggressive offences, namely homicide (25%) and robbery (25%). A further five participants (25%) are currently incarcerated for economic offences, namely theft (20%) and burglary (5%). The remaining five participants (25%) are serving a sentence for rape. None of the research participants were incarcerated for narcotic-related offences. This concurs with the research of Dissel (in Peacock, 2006: 90) which indicates that a sentence of direct incarceration is rarely imposed in cases

where youth are convicted for narcotic-related offences. Apart from the transgressions committed, the participants were also asked to indicate the length of their sentence and the amount of time for which they had already been incarcerated. This is presented in Figure 8 and Figure 9 respectively.

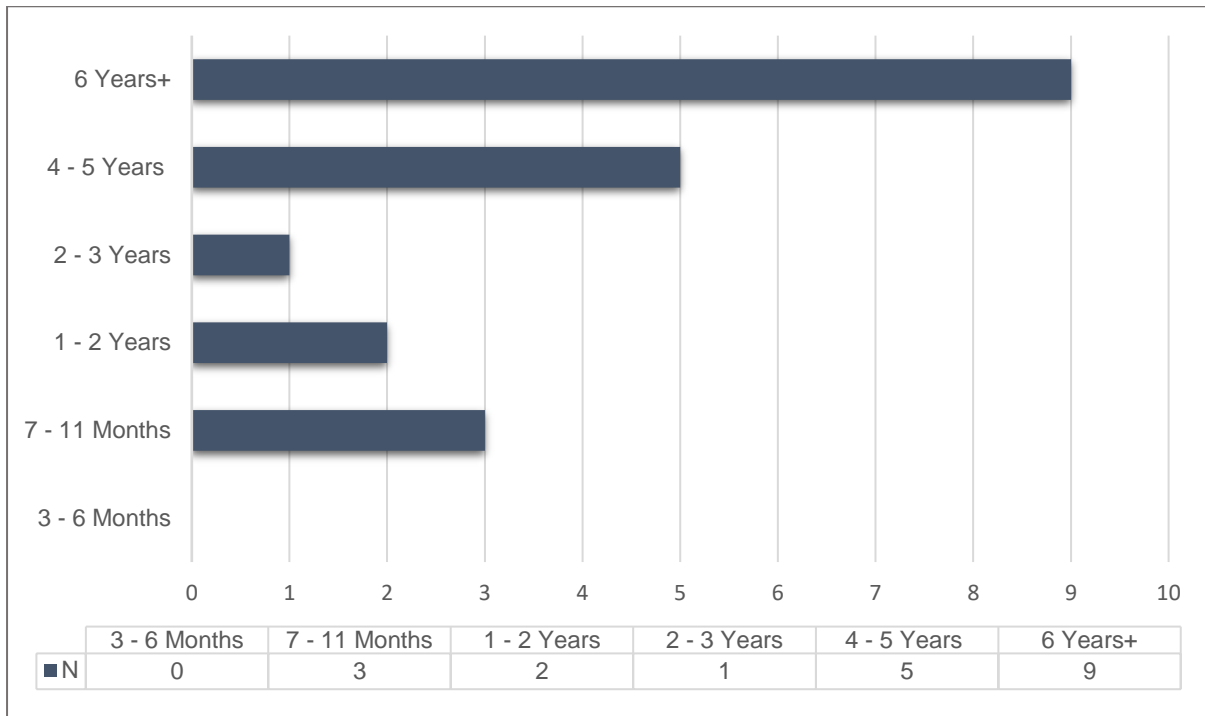


Figure 8: *Length of sentence*

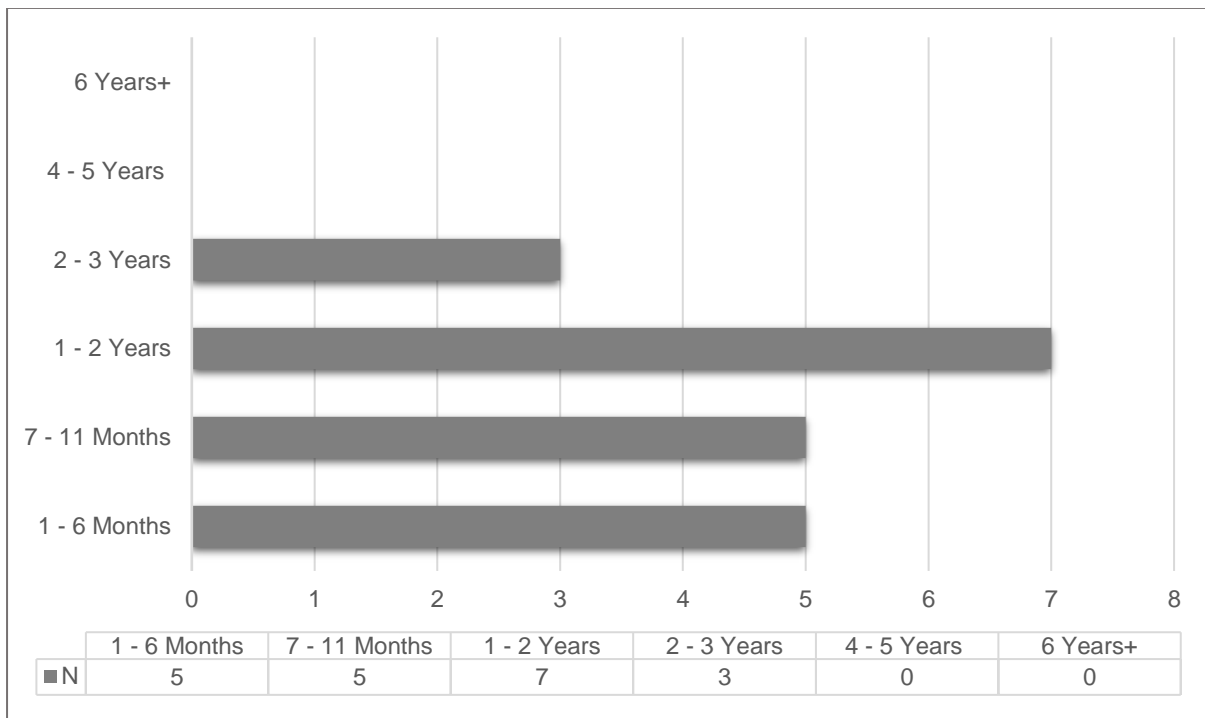


Figure 9: *Time spent incarcerated*

As is evident from Figure 8, the majority of the participants (45%) have been sentenced to a period of incarceration exceeding six years. Five participants (25%) are serving sentences ranging between four and five years, while three participants (15%) are serving short-term sentences ranging from seven to eleven months. Despite their relatively long sentences, most of the participants had not been incarcerated for longer than 18 months, with the majority (50%) having spent less than a year incarcerated (between 1 and 11 months). Three participants (15%) had already been incarcerated for a period exceeding two years, while none of the participants had been detained for four years or longer. The succeeding sections provide an outline of the data analysis technique, measures to enhance credibility and trustworthiness, and the ethical considerations followed in the study.

5.7. Data analysis

In order to capture the depth of the participants' experiences and perceptions on the socio-criminogenic risk factors which motivate youth misconduct, all the data collected during the interview phase of the research was audio recorded. The data was then organised and prepared for analysis through transcribing interviews and typing up field notes. The data collected from each interview was transcribed verbatim, and additional data gathered via participant observation during each interview was added to the respective transcript. After the completion of the transcription process, the collected data was read and re-read numerous times in order to gain a general sense of the information and to reflect on the overall meaning of the data. The data was then interpreted based on the research expectations and sub-expectations as presented in the preceding chapter, as this allowed for the initiation of discussions comparing and contrasting the findings to the theoretical frameworks utilised in the second chapter, and to the existing literature and prior research as outlined in the third chapter.

The collected data is represented by frequency and percentage distributions, together with narrative accounts from participants detailing their unique experiences and views with reference to their exposure to various socio-criminogenic risk factors within the family, community, school and peer group domains. Since research expectations rather than research hypotheses which allow for statistical analyses were formulated, it was decided to interpret responses provided by 50% or more of the sample as supportive to each respective research expectation or sub-expectation.

Responses provided by less than 50% of the sample population was interpreted as unsupportive to a particular expectation or sub-expectation. Moreover, due to the sample size and because a control group was not used in the research, generalisations with regard to the aforementioned research expectations cannot be made. Subsequently, the results are only applicable to the participants in the sample and should thus be viewed as a point of departure for further research.

5.8. Measures to enhance credibility and trustworthiness

According to Cope (2014: 89) credibility and trustworthiness in qualitative research refers to “the truth of the data or the participant views and the representation of them by the researcher”. Ryan, Coughlan and Cronin (2007: 743) as well as Creswell (2014: 251) concur, and further this by asserting that authenticity, credibility and trustworthiness in qualitative research denotes the process by which a researcher verifies the accuracy of the research findings based on the perspective of the researcher, the participant, or the reader of the account. Subsequently, this section provides an exposition of the strategies that were utilised to enhance the level of credibility and trustworthiness in the current study.

5.8.1. Piloting

The purpose of conducting a pilot study as noted by De Vos, et. al. (2011: 73) is to test the feasibility of the research methodology in order to identify and manage unforeseen challenges before embarking on the full-scale project (see section 5.5.). More specifically, the pilot study was utilised to assess the feasibility of the semi-structured interview schedule in terms of its viability in achieving the research objectives (see section 1.6.). Subsequently, the interview schedule was piloted with five participants from the sample population. Upon completion of the pilot study, the feasibility of the interview schedule was affirmed and none of the items on the interview schedule required changing. It was also established that the data obtained from the five participants were of high enough quality to be included in the final study.

Prior to piloting the interview schedule with five participants from the sample, the data collection instrument was piloted with two officials employed at the Kimberley Youth Development Centre. The officials had been employed at the centre for one year and three years respectively. Both officials had reportedly engaged in numerous discussions with youth detained at the centre, and were thus able to both confirm the

feasibility of the interview schedule, as well as to corroborate general themes which emerged from the data, thereby enhancing the level of credibility and trustworthiness of the study (also see section 5.5.).

5.8.2. Member checking

According to Shenton (2004: 68) member checks may be regarded as “the single most important provision that can be made to bolster a study’s credibility”. Creswell (2014: 251), Cope (2014: 90) and Kornbluh (2015: 397) concur by affirming that member checking is a crucial step used to enhance credibility and trustworthiness in qualitative research, and refers to a process in which the final report, specific descriptions or themes are taken back to the participants to determine the accuracy of the data. Lietz and Zayas (2010: 193) further this by noting that member checks may also refer to the authentication of data by obtaining feedback from the research participants at numerous stages during the interview process as this may improve the collaborative relationship between the researcher and participants, establish trustworthiness and ensure that interpretations made by the researcher reflect the meaning of information as perceived by the participants (Williams & Morrow, 2009: 579).

Thus, to further enhance the level of credibility and trustworthiness in this study, responses were read back to the participants throughout the course of the interviews in order to reflect on the way in which the responses were recorded. In addition, this also enhanced the quality and accuracy of the field notes compiled during the interviews and confirmed whether the correct meanings, inferences and interpretations were assigned to the respective responses provided by participants. Moreover, this strategy restricted the inclusion of personal opinions or biases during the data collection procedure.

Following from the aforementioned measures to enhance credibility and trustworthiness in this study, the subsequent section provides an exposition of the ethical considerations implemented during the course of the research.

5.9. Ethical considerations

According to Wagner, et. al. (2012: 62) ethics should be considered during every phase of the research design and implementation. Harris (2009: 105) concurs and highlights the role of ethics when conducting social science research, with particular reference to the field of Criminology, as research participants may experience anxiety about revealing their behaviour, and because law violating behaviour often encompasses sensitive issues. This section therefore outlines the ethical procedures followed in this study.

5.9.1. Permission to conduct the study

The application for ethical clearance was submitted to the Research Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Humanities, University of the Free State and full ethical approval was granted (Appendix 5). Thereafter, permission to conduct this study was also obtained from the Policy Coordination and Research Committee of the Department of Correctional Services (Appendix 6) and from the centre manager at the Kimberley Youth Development Centre (Appendix 3). The aforementioned processes served to ensure that the study would be conducted within the bounds of acceptable ethical practice, as well as to protect the research participants from any potential harm which may be associated with participation in the study.

5.9.2. Informed consent

All information related to the aims, duration, data collection and potential value of the study was thoroughly explained to the prospective participants. Potential participants were then afforded an opportunity to ask questions and to clear up any uncertainties before deciding whether to participate in this study. Voluntary written consent was then obtained from twenty participants (Appendix 4). Due to interviewing two correctional officials as one of the measures to enhance the credibility and trustworthiness of the study, voluntary written consent was also obtained from each correctional official.

5.9.3. Autonomy

During the explanation of the purpose and aims of the research, potential participants were also informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any point during the course of the data collection procedure. Furthermore participants were encouraged to disclose only information that they felt comfortable sharing as dictated by their

personal circumstances. This consideration was particularly important due to the sensitive nature of the research topic and the potential exposure to specific criminogenic risk factors such as prior abuse within the context of the family.

5.9.4. Anonymity and confidentiality

According to Babbie & Mouton (2003: 523) the “clearest concern” related to the protection of the participants’ interests and well-being is the protection of their identity. In this regard, special care was taken to safeguard the participants’ identities by assigning a pseudonym to each participant so that their identities remain protected, and to ensure that specific responses could not be linked to a particular participant. Data provided by each participant was not shared with any other participant, correctional services staff or the centre manager. Although a letter of consent indicating the identity of the participant was signed prior to conducting the interviews, only the researcher had access to these forms and all consent forms will be destroyed upon conclusion of the study. No personal particulars were recorded on the interview schedules or field notes, and the aforementioned pseudonyms were used in this regard.

5.9.5. Avoidance of harm

Due to the sensitive nature of the research, the participants should be regarded as a vulnerable group because of their tender age, as well as their involvement in law violating and potentially stigmatising behaviour. In this regard, special care was taken to use terminology approved by the Department of Correctional Services in order to limit the possibility of marginalisation or negative labelling. To further restrict the possibility of causing harm, questions were formulated clearly and unambiguously, and were tested in the pilot study (see section 5.5.) to ensure that it was in no way loaded or misleading. In the unlikely event that participants experienced any discomfort or trauma during the data collection process or after completing the interview, the services of a private psychologist (Registration Number: PS67705) was made available at no cost to the participant.

5.9.6. Deception

Information pertaining to the aims, purpose, methodology and nature of the study was explained verbally, and clearly outlined in the information sheet and consent forms. Participants were also afforded the opportunity to ask questions and clear up any uncertainties before deciding to participate in the study. None of the information was misrepresented or omitted, and participants were fully aware of what to expect from participating in the study.

5.9.7. Release or publication of the findings

The Department of Correctional Services, the centre manager of the Kimberley Youth Development Centre, and the participants were informed that the current study would be published as a Masters dissertation and that it is envisaged that the results obtained from the study would potentially be used for scientific articles and conference presentations. The Policy Coordination and Research Committee of the Department of Correctional Services have requested to be informed of the outcome of the study and the research results. The researcher will ensure that the DCS is informed, and that they receive a copy of the final report before the research results are utilised in any way.

5.10. Conclusion

With the information presented thus far, it can be concluded that the current study has been executed within the framework of a sound methodology to fulfil the aims of the study (see section 1.6.). The succeeding chapter will therefore present the findings of the study with reference to the research expectations as presented in the forgoing chapter, based on the data collected from semi-structured interviews, the observation of non-verbal cues and the recording of field notes throughout the interview process.

CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

The research expectations as set out in Chapter 4, were explored with the aid of a semi-structured interview schedule (Appendix 1). The findings derived from the research expectations formulated in relation to the aims of this study, are discussed in this chapter and the collected data is presented in frequency distribution tables and figures. Narrative accounts of the participants' experiences with regard to socio-criminogenic risk factors within the domain of the family, community, school and peer group is also provided where applicable.

6.1. Discussion of findings for which research expectations have been formulated

This section presents an exposition of the findings for which research expectations have been formulated. The collected data is presented in frequency distribution tables, figures and narrative accounts of the participants' views and experiences regarding their exposure to various socio-criminogenic risk factors within each of the aforementioned domains.

6.1.1. Research expectation 1: Socio-criminogenic risk factors within the family domain

This research expectation was formulated on the basis that the majority of research participants who had been exposed to socio-criminogenic risk factors within the family domain would report that the following factors contributed to their law-violating behaviour:

- 6.1.1.1. Socio-economic disadvantage within the family unit.
- 6.1.1.2. Family conflict and interpersonal violence.
- 6.1.1.3. Inadequate parental supervision.
- 6.1.1.4. Parental and sibling deviance.

6.1.1.1. Sub-expectation 1: Socio-economic disadvantage within the family unit

The first sub-expectation was formulated on the premise that the majority of participants in the sample would report that socio-economic disadvantage within the family unit motivated them to come into conflict with the law as several authors have highlighted poverty and unemployment within the family unit as a pertinent predictor

for youth misconduct (Gaik, et. al., 2010: 385; Lipsey & Derzon, 1998; Van Steden, et. al., 2012: 56). The link between economic hardship and youth misconduct has also been substantiated in both official crime statistics and longitudinal studies (Arthur, 2007: 25). Case (2017: 510) concurs, and stresses the interrelatedness between poverty and maladaptive behaviours such as truancy, substance abuse and assault.

Figure 10 presents an exposition of participants in the sample who reported residing in a household with a father, mother or other family member who was employed prior to the commission of their current transgression.

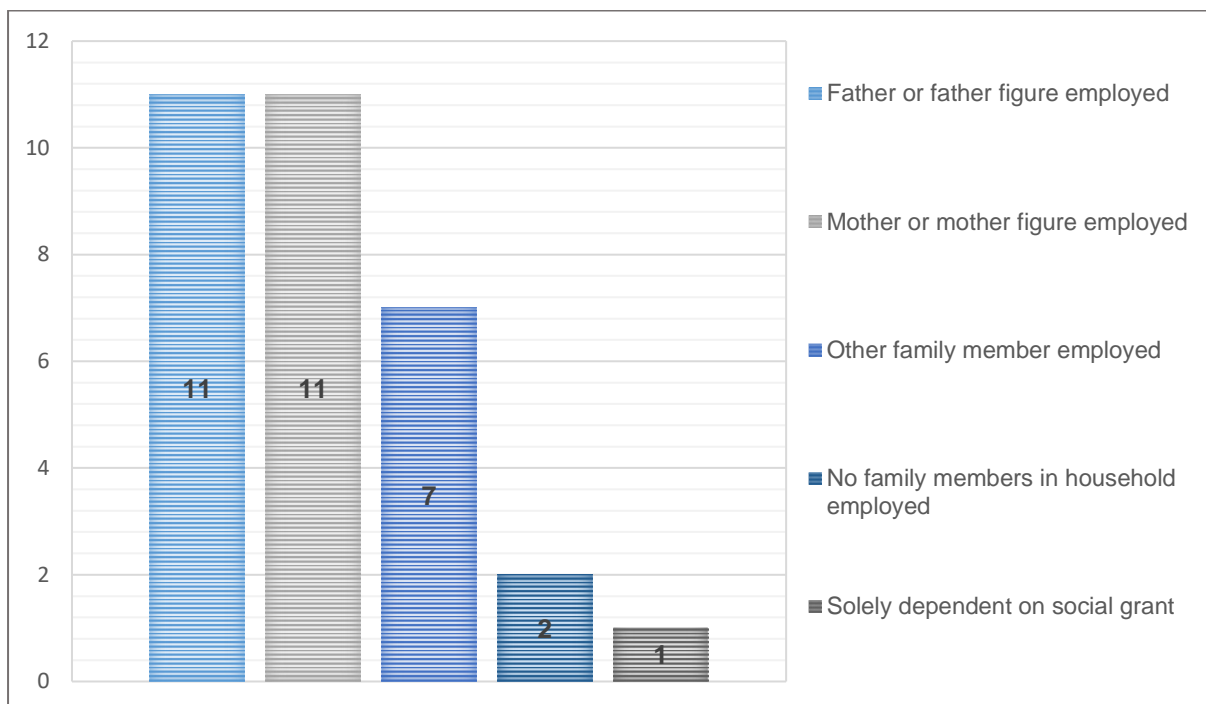


Figure 10: *Members of the household employed prior to current transgression¹*

Prior to the transgression for which participants are currently serving a sentence, the majority of participants reported having resided in a household with either a father or father figure who was employed (55%), or with a mother or mother figure who was employed (55%). Seven participants (35%) reported living with another family member who was employed, which included residing with an aunt, uncle, cousin, brother or sister who is employed. Two participants (10%) from the sample population reported residing in a household with neither a father figure nor a mother figure who is

¹ The total number of participant responses presented in Figure 10 exceeds the sample size (N=20) as each participant may have resided in a household where more than one member of their family was employed.

employed, nor with a family member who receives a social grant from government. One participant (5%) was reared in a household which was solely dependent on a financial grant from the government.

With regard to poverty and unemployment, Bartol and Bartol (2017: 54) and Gaik, et. al. (2010: 385) note that neither poverty nor unemployment should be regarded as a risk factor for youth misconduct as young persons may perceive and experience economic hardship quite differently. Subsequently, Figure 11 presents an exposition of the proportion of participants who regard their family as being economically deprived or disadvantaged.

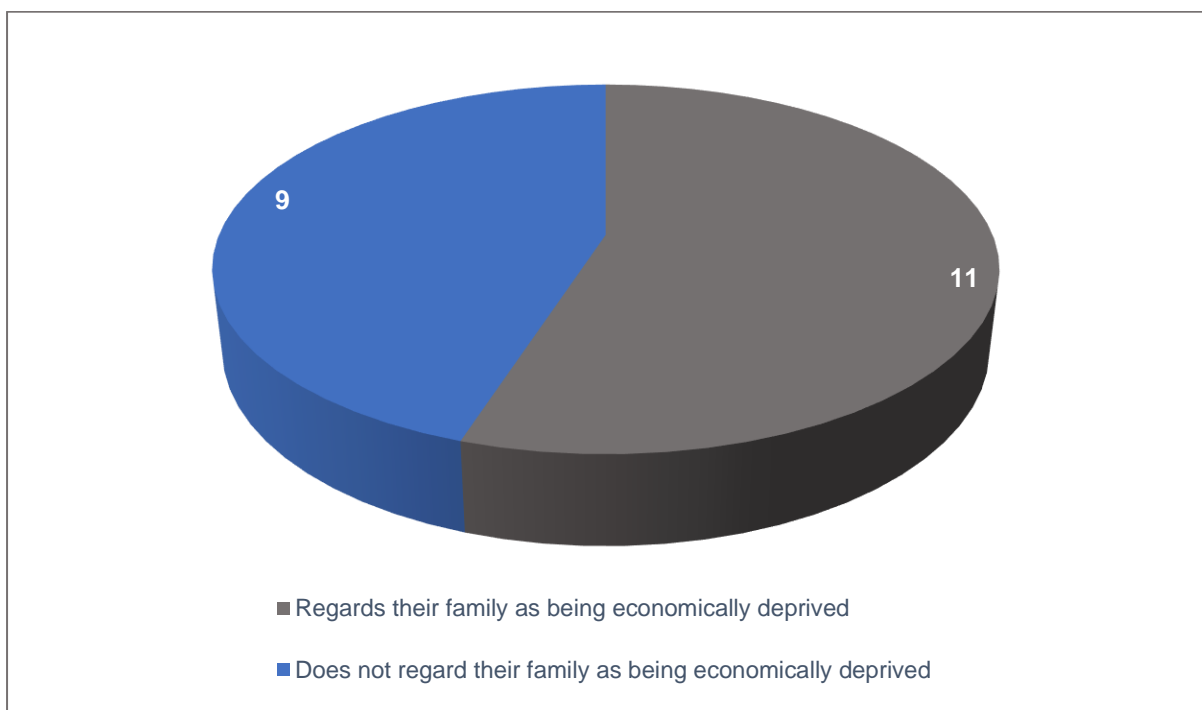


Figure 11: *Participants who regard their family as being economically deprived*

The majority of participants (55%) regarded their family as being economically deprived, in comparison to nine participants (45%) who experienced little or no financial difficulties in their household. Several participants who encountered financial hardship within their family explained their experiences as follows:

P1: *“The money was not enough because sometimes I’ll be needing school fees or school uniform then I will have to wait close to nine months before I could get the things”.*

P2: *“There wasn’t really any income, just my grandmother’s pension. Things that we needed, we didn’t get easily”.*

P3: *“Yes, I think we have financial problems because my mother lost her job. The other thing is, since I am in prison, I am going to be released soon and it will be hard for them to find me school outside because we won’t have money for the registration at the school”.*

P4: *“There was a lot of problems with money because sometimes when I was still in school my parents used to borrow money to buy me shoes sometimes. If I need books I have to wait until a couple of months because my mother was the only one to look to for clothes, books, to buy me food, lunch fair. She was the only one”.*

P7: *“They have money problems”.*

P9: *“Financial challenges they were there”.*

P13: *“At home now and then I had to do odd jobs in Tips, the coloured area, like cleaning yards. Then I used the money for electricity and so the young ones could eat”.*

P17: *“Yes, that’s how it is”.*

P20: *“Yes, because sometimes nothing, no money. Sometimes at home, no food”.*

In total, eleven participants from the sample (55%) perceived their family unit as being economically deprived or disadvantaged and identified financial difficulties within their households as a factor which contributed to the commission of the offence for which they are currently serving a sentence. Several of these participants explained this interrelationship between exposure to economic hardship in the family unit and their own law-violating behaviour as follows:

P1: *“Yes, because I ended up a gangster and every weekend we were robbing people, shops. Last year my sister fell pregnant and I was already inside (incarcerated) so I gave my pin so she could use those money”.*

P2: *“Yes, I can say that, because I couldn’t get things I wanted so I joined a gang. We robbed people at night so that I could fit in with the guys. The money I got, I used for myself, not to help at home”.*

P4: *"I was in Matric (Grade 12) but I leave it halfway, so I can say the lack of money or the struggling we were going through that's why I made crime".*

P8: *"I think so, because I didn't get what I needed".*

P12: *"Yes, because I don't have money outside. I struggle".*

P13: *"Yes, it was. I broke in and took things to sell. Then I gave the money to my mother".*

P17: *"It is so, because in the townships it's hard to get a job if you don't have somebody that provide for you".*

P19: *"Yes, because I suffered financially. I just committed crime to get money, but I did it with the gang".*

The findings above correspond with the research findings obtained by Hay, et al. (2007: 593) which indicated that poverty within the family unit substantially increases the rate of youth transgressions. These findings also concur with the findings obtained by Khan and Singh (2014: 112) in which the majority of participants (74.4%) cited family poverty or exclusion from the labour market as one of the major factors which motivated them to transgress; and with the findings of Rekker, et. al. (2015: 2) which confirmed the association between being reared in an impoverished family and being at an increased risk for contravening the law.

The findings obtained in the current study also support the notion that youth from impoverished families are more likely to transgress as they may lack the socially approved means to attain their desired social or economic goals. The premise that economic hardship may motivate youth to come into conflict with the law is further substantiated by the Anomie and Differential Opportunity theories respectively. As noted by Merton (1938: 677) youth may opt to adapt to financial strain by becoming innovative and using socially unacceptable or illegitimate means to achieve status or to reach their social goals, as illustrated in the response of Participant 13 above. Likewise, Cloward and Ohlin (1960: 86) postulate that youth who experience restricted access to legitimate opportunities seek out illegitimate avenues to success which often includes forming or joining a deviant subculture, as is apparent in the response of Participants 1, 2 and 19 above.

Based on the responses provided by the majority of participants in the sample (55%), it is apparent that youth have a higher propensity of seeking to meet their basic and other needs outside of the home in cases where caregivers are unable to provide for these needs. Furthermore, the findings highlighted in this section provide support for the respective research sub-expectation as more than 50% of participants in the sample (55%) identified socio-economic disadvantage within the family as a risk factor for youth misconduct and as a key factor which contributed to their own law-violating behaviour.

6.1.1.2. Sub-expectation 2: Family conflict and interpersonal violence

Apart from economic deprivation, numerous authors have noted a positive correlation between youth misconduct and the experience of family conflict or interpersonal violence (Bartollas & Schmallegger, 2013: 107; Bender, 2010: 466; Clark, 2012: 83; Siegel, 2002: 166; Spatz-Widom, 1989: 162; Stouthamer-Loeber, et. al., 2002: 262). Hence, this sub-expectation was formulated on the basis that the majority of research participants would identify family conflict and interpersonal violence as a factor which motivated their law-violating behaviour, as the experience of conflict within the household may desensitise youth to acts of violence and may negatively impact vital social learning processes. The association between youth misconduct and exposure to family conflict and interpersonal violence have also been supported in several prior research studies.

Data collected in the pioneering study of Spatz-Widom (1989: 162) indicated that 26% of youth who suffered abuse had been arrested as juveniles, while 29% had criminal records as adults. Likewise, the research findings of Bartollas and Schmallegger (2013: 107) indicate that the experience of family conflict increases the probability of arrest during adolescence by approximately 59%, and by roughly 29% during adulthood. Moreover, youth subjected to violence within the family are arrested earlier in their life, are arrested more frequently and are more likely to engage in violent transgressions (Bender, 2010: 466).

The relationship between youth misconduct and the experience of family conflict and interpersonal violence is further substantiated by Albert Bandura (1977) who argues that both youth and adults may learn behaviour via observational or social learning. Individuals therefore acquire the ability to reproduce both observed behaviour as well

as any conduct which they experience themselves. Subsequently, it could be argued that youth who experience or witness physical or other forms of victimisation within the family unit may become accustomed or desensitised to acts of violence and aggression, and may be more likely to use violence as a means with which to achieve social goals or to resolve disputes. Arguably, youth may also have a higher propensity to mimic behaviours which they witness or experience more frequently, as individuals tend to be more inclined to internalise and re-enact behaviours which they observe or experience at regular intervals (Siegel, 2004: 156; Spatz-Widom, 1989: 162).

With reference to the participants in the current study, Table 8 represents the number of participants who report having witnessed or experienced conflict and interpersonal violence within the family context, and provides an exposition of the type of conflict experienced by the respective participants. It is possible that a respective participant may have reported exposure to multiple forms of family conflict or interpersonal violence. Thus, the total number of participants (N) and the percentage (%) does not equate to 20 and 100% respectively.

Table 8
Participants who report having witnessed or experienced family conflict or interpersonal violence

Type of Conflict	Number (N)	Percentage %
Verbal	6	30
Physical	6	30
Emotional	1	5
Sexual	0	0

Based on the type of conflict experienced as presented in Table 8, the majority of the participants who identified occurrences of violence or aggression within the household have reportedly been subjected to verbal (30%) and physical (30%) acts of aggression. One participant (5%) reported emotional abuse within the household, while none of the research participants reported incidents involving sexual harassment, sexual assault or sodomy. In this regard, it may be possible that none of the participants had experienced any form of sexual victimisation, or they may have felt too embarrassed to disclose or discuss these occurrences during the interview. In

support of the former, it should be noted that none of the participants displayed signs of trauma or distress during this phase of the interview, based on the observation of non-verbal cues. The participants who reported family conflict or interpersonal violence recounted their experiences as follows:

P1: *“Only my uncle, he was always fighting with my mother – but it was not a physical fight, only a verbal one”.*

P2: *“Just my aunt. She was verbally abusive towards me. She told me I must fuck off from the house, my father can’t support me, and things like that”.*

P6: *“My biological father murdered my mother – and me also. He broke my two hands because I helping my mother. Broke two hands and he beat me with the fist, here. He also take the iron, but not the modern one. He beat my mother with that iron”.*

P8: *“There was a time but that was when my father was still alive, because when I left he was alive and he died while I was in prison. My aunts fought with him because he was drunk and he fought over money”.*

P10: *“Yes, it was my sister. He just come to me and hit me with the broom. When they tell me I must go to shop or clean the yard, I refuse because some of us when we grow up, we think staying at home and cleaning – it’s like you are a small boy”.*

P13: *“Yes, now and then my step-father hit my mother. Then I fight with him because he fights with my mother”.*

P16: *“Yes, it’s my bigger brother. He used to beat me”.*

In total, nine participants (45%) from the sample reportedly witnessed and/or experienced physical or other acts of victimisation within their household. Based on this portion of the sample population, only three participants (15%) cited family conflict and interpersonal violence as a motivating factor for their own law-violating behaviour. These participants explained the interrelationship between family conflict and their own behaviour as follows:

P2: *“Yes. I wasn’t a person who liked swearing, but since my aunt told me ugly things I felt that I am also growing up. All those bad words caused me to join a gang because I felt they didn’t care for me, so I will rather choose friends who do”.*

P8: *“I can say that, because my aunts told me my father says it’s because of the things that happened at home, that’s why I am sitting in jail now”.*

P13: *“Yes, he goes to work then he doesn’t give my mother the full money, even if he has two kids at home. Then they fight about money”.*

With reference to the data provided by the research participants, it became apparent that the majority of participants in the sample (55%) did not identify family conflict or interpersonal violence as a pertinent predictor for youth misconduct, nor did they regard it as a risk factor which significantly influenced their own law-violating behaviour as the minority of participants (15%) ascribed their behaviour to experiences of violence or aggression within the household. The remainder of the sample population, including those participants (45%) who identified exposure to familial conflict as a risk factor for youth misconduct but not as a factor influencing their own unlawful behaviour, and those participants (55%) who reported no exposure to family conflict or interpersonal violence, ascribed their law-violating behaviour to other socio-criminogenic risk factors such as illicit substance abuse and gang membership or they simply reported that it had no influence on their behaviour. Several of these participants motivated their view as follows:

P1: *“No, it didn’t affect my behaviour because they were fighting and arguing about their stuff – it was nothing of me”.*

P3: *“No, the conflict in my family had nothing to do with this crime that I have committed. It was all about the gangsters”.*

P5: *“No, there was no violence. It was that addiction of mine. I used drugs every day from 2010. I only stopped when I went to Grootvlei (Correctional Centre)”.*

P10: *“No, I don’t feel it was that violence”.*

P15: *“No, because even though he beat me I still continue. I stole stuff just to go and sell for drugs”.*

P16: *“No, it didn’t have an influence on my behaviour”.*

Furthermore, it became apparent that exposure to family conflict and interpersonal violence was not perceived as having a significant influence on the behaviour of the participants regardless of the severity or type of conflict experienced. This may be

illustrated in the response of Participant 6 who reports both witnessing and experiencing physical conflict within the home by stating:

P6: *“My biological father murdered my mother – and me also. He broke my two hands because I helping my mother. Broke two hands and he beat me with the fist, here. He also take the iron, but not the modern one. He beat my mother with that iron”.*

However, when asked if he perceives experiences such as these as a factor which influenced his behaviour and contributed to him coming into conflict with the law, he simply stated:

P6: *“I don’t think it was that violence. It was not about that”.*

The findings obtained in relation to the influence of family conflict and interpersonal violence therefore seem to be inconsistent with prior findings obtained by Bartollas and Schmallegger (2013: 107), Bender (2010: 466), Siegel (2002: 166) and Spatz-Widom (1989: 162). Yet, it should be noted that although the minority of the participants in the sample (15%) identified family conflict and interpersonal violence as a motivating factor for their current transgression, it could be possible that exposure to conflict within the family unit may have contributed to the law-violating behaviour of several other participants, as the majority of the participants who reported experiencing physical violence or verbal aggression within the home seemed somewhat hesitant when explaining the effect of family conflict on their behaviour based on the observation of non-verbal cues during the interview phase.

Furthermore, participants were quick when explaining specific incidences of verbal or physical confrontations, but hesitant when asked to relate these incidents to their own behaviour. It therefore became clear that it was more difficult for participants to discuss their views on the influence of family conflict and interpersonal violence on their behaviour, in comparison to discussing their respective experiences pertaining to witnessing or being subjected to verbal or physical confrontations in their family.

It could also be argued that participants in the sample had witnessed or experienced violent confrontations so frequently in the context of their family, community, school or peer group that they had to an extent become desensitised to verbal and physical confrontations, or oblivious to the degree to which familial conflict may have influenced their behaviour. It is also possible that family conflict and interpersonal violence did to

an extent, influence the law-violating behaviour of several other participants in the sample albeit significantly less in comparison to the influence of other socio-criminogenic risk factors such as illicit substance abuse or their involvement in gang-related activities. Thus, conflict within the household may have been experienced by other participants in the sample, but may not have been perceived as having a significant influence on their unlawful behaviour.

The focus of the current study was to explore the factors which youth in the sample identify as crime-inducing and to gauge their views on the influence which these factors may have had in relation to their own law-violating behaviour. It could therefore also be argued that exposure to family conflict and interpersonal violence may not have been perceived as a significant socio-criminogenic risk factor for youth in the sample, but may be a pertinent factor motivating the unlawful behaviour of countless other youth as experiences of violence and aggression may differ significantly depending on the context in which it occurs, the frequency with which it is experienced and the frame of reference of the individual witnessing or being subjected to the confrontation.

Despite the aforementioned arguments in support of familial conflict as a key risk factor within the family context, the findings presented in this section do not support the sub-expectation that family conflict and interpersonal violence would be reported as a pertinent contributor to youth misconduct by the majority of participants in the sample. This factor was identified as a risk factor for youth misconduct by the minority of the participants (45%) and was perceived as having contributed to the law-violating behaviour of only three participants in the sample (15%).

However, due to the sample size and because a control group was not used in the current study, the findings related to family conflict and interpersonal violence should by no means be regarded as conclusive or generalisable to the universe of youth in conflict with the law. Rather, it is envisaged that these findings may be used as a point of departure for further research, with specific reference to quantitative research conducted with an all-inclusive population-representative sample. Longitudinal research and research involving female participants, and participants under the age of 18 may also provide valuable insight and greater understanding of the role and

influence of family conflict and interpersonal violence as a key predictor for youth misconduct.

6.1.1.3. Sub-expectation 3: Inadequate parental supervision

This sub-expectation was formulated on the premise that the majority of youth in the sample would report an inadequate level of parental supervision and would identify the nature of after-school supervision they received as a key contributing factor for their own law-violating behaviour. This premise is supported by Wang, et. al. (2014: 44) and Williams and McShane (2014: 91) who argue that youth who are not effectively supervised are at an increased risk of coming into conflict with the law, as these youth may have a higher propensity to associate with deviant peers, engage in the abuse of illicit substances or become involved in unsafe sexual practices. This notion is further supported by Harris (2009: 44), Bartollas & Schmalleger (2013: 104) and Bezuidenhout (2013: 77) who highlight poor parental monitoring as a key factor for youth misconduct by asserting that inadequate supervision provides youth with the freedom to do as they please without regard for the consequences associated with their actions. With reference to the current study, Table 9 provides an outline of the research participants' experiences with reference to the nature of after-school supervision they received.

Table 9
Participant views on the nature of after-school supervision they received

Nature of Supervision	Number (N)	Percentage %
Adequate	12	60
Inadequate	8	40
Total	20	100

As illustrated in Table 9 above, the majority of participants from the sample population (60%) described the nature of parental or after-school supervision they received prior to the commission of their current offence as inadequate or "bad". Several participants motivated this view by stating:

P2: *"Most of the time I did my own thing".*

P3: *“Bad. Sometimes they came late from work, they came 20h00 or 21h00. So all the time, I have to spend it alone or with my aunt. When I come from school I visit at her place. She didn’t supervise me. I just tell her things I need, then she give me things and I go home. I always spent time with my friends”.*

P4: *“There was never someone, because my mother was at work and my step-dad was not really there at home during the day. When I come from school he is maybe in the street somewhere visiting a friend. I am always alone”.*

P5: *“Good parental supervision when I was at home, but not when I was with my friends and I was with them most of the time”.*

P6: *“My grandfather was not watching me most of the time”.*

P8: *“They (family) said I must do my own things, I must find a girlfriend and so on”.*

P9: *“Most of the time I was alone or with my friends”.*

P10: *“Not good. When I go out, I go to my old friends”.*

P12: *“She was watching me when I do my homework, then I go to street to my friends”.*

P15: *“Bad”.*

P17: *“My mother was the one guiding me. It was good until she passed, then there was no one to guide me”.*

P20: *“Not good”.*

The findings from the current study support the findings of Wang, et. al. (2014: 44), Williams & McShane (2014: 91), Harris (2009: 44), Bartollas and Schmallegger (2013: 104) and Bezuidenhout (2013: 77), as the majority of the participants (60%) described the nature of parental supervision they received as inadequate, and reported spending a substantial amount of their unsupervised time in the presence of their peers or with members of a youth gang. The findings also concur with the research of Chaiken (2000: 7) who explored the environmental factors which facilitated youth misconduct by obtaining data from a random sample of 213 males aged 13 to 17 years, whom had all been convicted for violent transgressions. The research results obtained by Chaiken (2000: 7) indicated that 75% of the sample reported a lack of supervision and after-school care for one or more days per week and that 48% of the sample were

reportedly never supervised by a parent or other responsible person (see section 3.3.1.5.).

With reference to the experiences of the participants in the current study, the majority of the participants in the sample (60%) also identified inadequate parental supervision as a motivating factor for their own maladaptive behaviour. In this regard, the participants explained the association between coming into conflict with the law and the nature of supervision they received while growing up as follows:

P1: *“Yes, I can say that because my sister will let me go out and play, then she stay at home. She will only hear I did 1, 2, 3 – 1, 2, 3. That’s the time I would hang out with my gang as well”.*

P2: *“Yes. I just felt my family don’t care for me, so I am going to do as I please. This also made me to join a gang”.*

P3: *“Yes, I think so because by the time I was busy with the gangsterism thing I wasn’t being guided because they (family) were not always there for me the time I was growing up. There was no one to guide me or to warn me about these gangs”.*

P4: *“I think that’s the thing, because when I was on my own, I made my own choices. The choices that I made, going in there then I don’t have a choice to come out”.*

P6: *“Yes, I think it is. When they (family) was there watching me, I didn’t think I could do this crime – but when they were not watching me, that’s when I went out robbing the people”.*

P9: *“Yes I can say so. I didn’t express my feelings with them. If I did, I will not be in this position. I think because I spend many time with friends is why I did this crime. I wanted to fit into society with negativity”.*

P10: *“Yes, because it’s the time when I’m with my friends that peer pressure will start”.*

P15: *“I used to walk with older guys when I was young and there was no one who could take me out by telling me not to walk with them”.*

P17: *“Yes, I think so because it’s how I see it. I know if she (mother) was there, she would have told me not to do such things so I wouldn’t go out there and commit the crime I committed”.*

P19: *“Yes, because they (family) were not looking out for me – then I joined the gang because they were there for me every time”.*

Based on the responses provided by the majority of the participants in the sample (60%), it is apparent that inadequate supervision and after-school care may be identified as a contributor to youth misconduct as inadequate monitoring may provide youth with the freedom to behave as they please, as is evident in the response of Participants 2 and 4. As noted earlier in this section, insufficient monitoring also increases the likelihood for youth to associate with deviant peers or to engage in gang-related activities, as illustrated in the response of Participants 1, 2, 3, 15 and 19. These findings also correspond with the findings of Arthur (2007: 19) and Harris (2009: 44) which indicate that poor supervision has the potential of jeopardising vital developmental processes associated with proper socialisation, including the advancement of moral reasoning, impulse control and non-violent conflict resolution (Harris, 2009: 44).

Youth who experience lower levels of parental supervision or inadequate supervision by other responsible persons may also be more inclined to come into conflict with the law as these youth may potentially also experience lower levels of attachment to positive role models. This is supported by the Social Control perspective of Hirschi (1969: 18) which proposes that prosocial adults, with particular reference to parents, are responsible for the initial socialisation of youth and for the internalisation of norms. The inadequate supervision of youth could therefore jeopardise the bonding process between caregiver and child, subsequently placing the child at an increased risk to associate with deviant peers, abuse substances or come into conflict with the law, as is evident based on the findings obtained in the current study.

As inadequate parental or after-school supervision has been identified as a risk factor for youth misconduct by the majority of the participants in the sample (60%) and has been cited as a factor which contributed to their own behaviour, the findings highlighted in this section thus provide support for the respective research sub-expectation that the majority of the research participants would identify a lack of adequate supervision within the family unit as a risk factor for youth misconduct and as a key factor which contributed to their own law-violating behaviour.

6.1.1.4. Sub-expectation 4: Parental and sibling deviance

According to Ntshangase (2015: 39) and Mhlongo (2005: 38), youth reared in households where caregivers or siblings engage in law-violating behaviour are more vulnerable to engage in antisocial behaviour as they may emulate these maladaptive behavioural traits, and utilise it in other contexts such as the school or peer group. The detrimental effect of residing with parents or siblings who transgress is also supported by Bandura's Social Learning perspective, which suggests that law-violating behaviour may be emulated by youth who model the behaviour displayed by deviant adults or siblings, whom they often view as role models (Siegel, 2004: 156). Hence, this sub-expectation was formulated on the basis that the majority of youth in the sample would report exposure to parental or sibling deviance, and would identify it as a factor which contributed to their own law-violating behaviour.

In this regard, Figure 12 below presents an exposition of the number of youth who reported residing in a household where parent/s, siblings or other members of the household engaged in violence or misconduct.

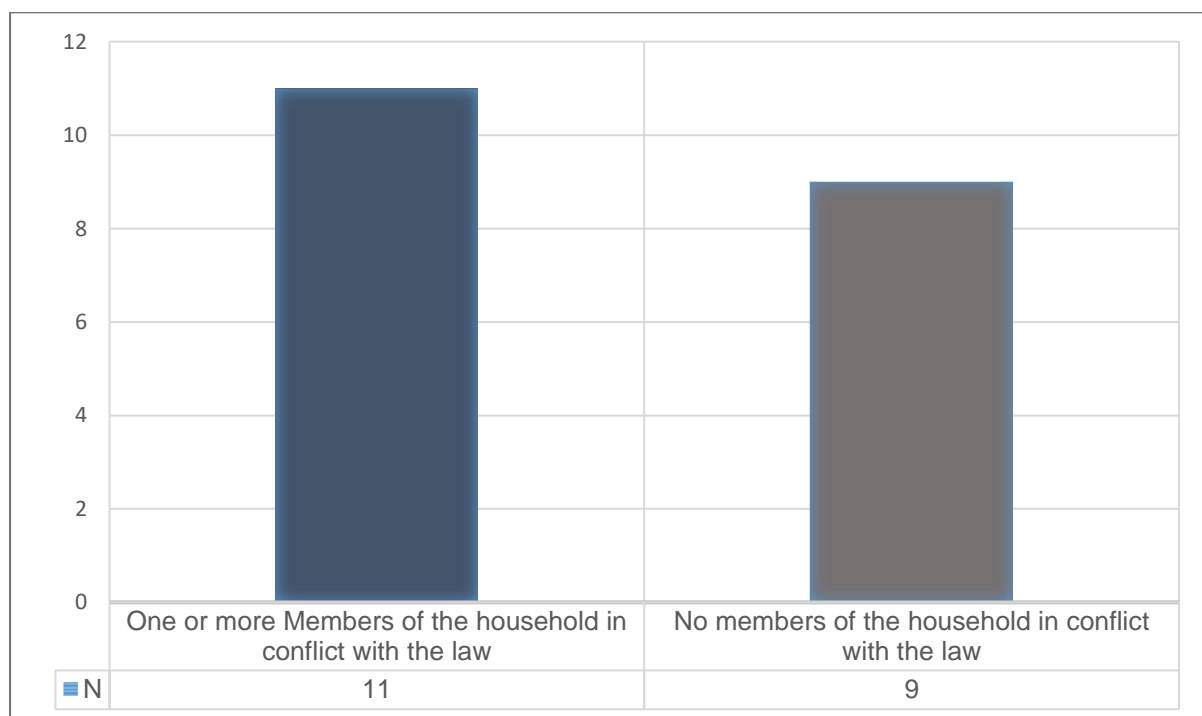


Figure 12: *Participants who reported parental or sibling deviance*

The majority of participants in the sample (55%) reported residing in a household where one or more members of the family or extended family engaged in violent and/or law-violating behaviour. This corresponds with the research findings of Hawkins, et.

al. (2000: 3), Arthur (2007: 21) and West and Farrington (in Siegel, 2004: 148) who found a similar correlation between youth misconduct and parent or sibling criminality (see section 3.3.1.2.). Several participants in the current study explained their experiences with regard to parental or sibling deviance as follows:

P1: *“My mother and my uncle. They were once in prison. My mother was in Pretoria prison and my uncle was in Klerksdorp prison”.*

P3: *“It was my uncle. I think it was 2015 when he committed murder”.*

P4: *“My biological father was also in jail”.*

P6: *“Only my biological father. As I grew up he told me that he was also in prison”.*

P8: *“Yes my father. He was also in jail for murder, but that didn’t happen in the place we stay now. It happened in the Western Cape”.*

P10: *“Yes, it’s my uncle. He did the robbery”.*

P11: *“Yes, just my father”.*

P15: *“Yes, my uncle. It was a robbery”.*

P19: *“Yes, a lot of my brothers. I don’t know which types of crimes”.*

These findings support the findings of Bezuidenhout (2013: 77) and Craine, et. al. (2009: 436), which indicate that youth reared by caregivers who transgress the law may start to view criminality or violent behaviour as ‘common’ or ‘normal’ when resolving disputes, dealing with strain or when attempting to reach social goals. Farrington, et. al. (1996) and Howitt (2015: 75) also support the relationship between youth misconduct and parental or sibling deviance by emphasising that violence and criminality may form part of the socialisation process of youth when reared in households characterised by an acceptance of antisocial behaviour, as youth may observe parents or siblings being rewarded for maladaptive behaviour thereby reinforcing their tendency to transgress as well. The detrimental effect which parental or sibling deviance may have on the socialisation process of youth is illustrated by the response of Participant 8 who describes his own experience as follows:

P8: *“To be honest, it did have an effect on my life because I felt like he didn’t give me fatherly love when I was growing up because I got that from my grandfather. My mother*

also left me because she went to work, so I can say I grew up with one father and that was my grandfather. He (father) came home when he was released from prison then he told me he is my father, my real father. That's how I got to know him, but that time I was still a bit young, but that's how I got to know him. I also started to learn what type of man he is. When he is drunk, he is very violent. When he is sober, you don't even know he is there, so quiet he is. So I think I also adapted that from him, because he is my father and he must be an example for me. So I probably saw things from him, that's why I can say the things I have done, I saw it from him".

According to Craine, et. al. (2009: 436) and Ntshangase (2015: 39) family members often imitate one another's behaviour, with youth being particularly susceptible to engage in antisocial behaviour if influenced by siblings or other members of the household, especially when misconduct is associated with social rewards. It could thus be argued that youth who are reared in households where both parents and siblings engage in law-violating behaviour, as opposed to only a single parent or sibling, would be more at risk of coming into conflict with the law as antisocial behaviour would be observed more often and reinforced more frequently. This argument is supported by the response of Participant 1, 5 and 10 below:

P1: *"My mother, she stabbed someone and she was defending her cousin. My uncle was in a gang. They robbed a bank then they catch them and found him guilty".*

P5: *"My father was in jail for rape and murder. My brother committed this crime with me. He is at Grootvlei (Correctional Centre)".*

P10: *"Yes, because my older brothers and uncles' did behave like I am behaving now. So it (crime) is something that rotate in the family".*

Caregivers who violate the law themselves, may also be less likely to punish youth for engaging in socially unacceptable behaviour. Subsequently, this may positively reinforce youth misconduct as adolescents would not sufficiently learn to associate deviant or unlawful behaviour with a negative outcome (i.e. punishment), thereby making them more likely to continue displaying maladaptive behavioural traits (Louw, et. al., 2005: 59; Siegel, 2004: 156).

Based on the findings presented in this section, it could therefore be argued that youth have a higher propensity of coming into conflict with the law when reared in

households where members of the family or extended family engage in law-violating behaviour. Furthermore, the findings highlighted in this section provide support for the respective research sub-expectation as the majority of participants in the sample (55%) identified parental and sibling deviance as a risk factor for youth misconduct and as a key factor which contributed to the commission of their own unlawful behaviour.

However, it should be noted that exposure to any one socio-criminogenic risk factor is seldom sufficient to produce law-violating behaviour (Hawkins, et. al., 2000: 7). Therefore, it could be argued that youth would have a higher probability to transgress when exposed to several risk factors within their family or external environment. In this regard, Figure 13 provides a summary of the most frequently reported criminogenic risk factors within the family domain, based on responses obtained from the participants in the current study.

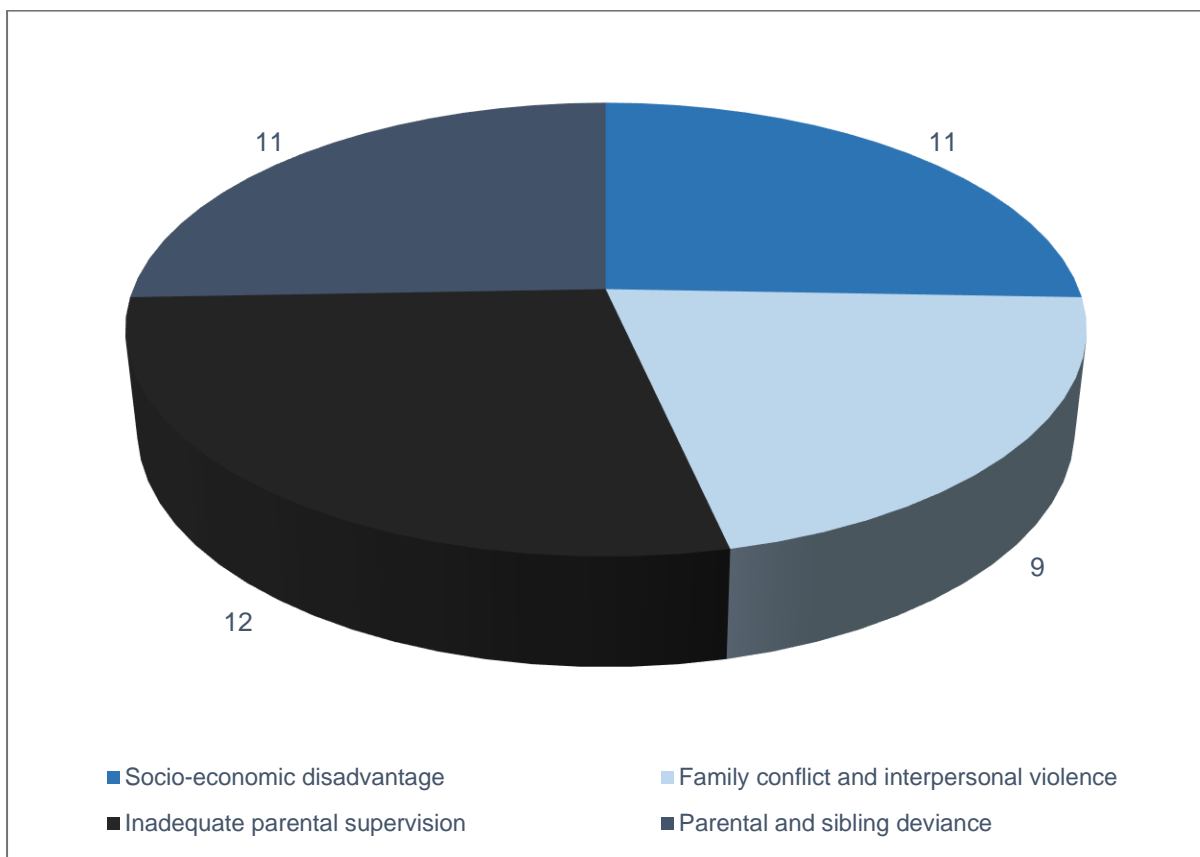


Figure 13: *The most common family risk factors identified by participants²*

² With regard to Figure 13, it is possible that a respective participant may have reported exposure to multiple socio-criminogenic risk factors within the family unit. Thus, the total number of participants (N) and the percentage (%) does not equate to 20 and 100% respectively.

With reference to the familial risk factors presented in Figure 13, the majority of youth in the sample (60%) had reportedly experienced an inadequate level of parental or after-school supervision, while 55% of youth in the sample reported being reared in an economically deprived or disadvantaged family. Parental and sibling deviance were identified by 11 participants in the sample (55%), while nine participants (45%) reported incidents of family conflict and interpersonal violence. Although youth identified several risk factors within the family domain (as illustrated in Figure 13), it was essential to gain an understanding of their unique experiences and views regarding their exposure to these factors as the mere presence of a criminogenic risk factor does not necessarily indicate that the individual would also regard this factor as a contributor to their own law-violating behaviour. Subsequently, Figure 14 presents an exposition of the family risk factors which youth in the sample identified as pertinent factors which influenced their behaviour and which contributed to them coming into conflict with the law.

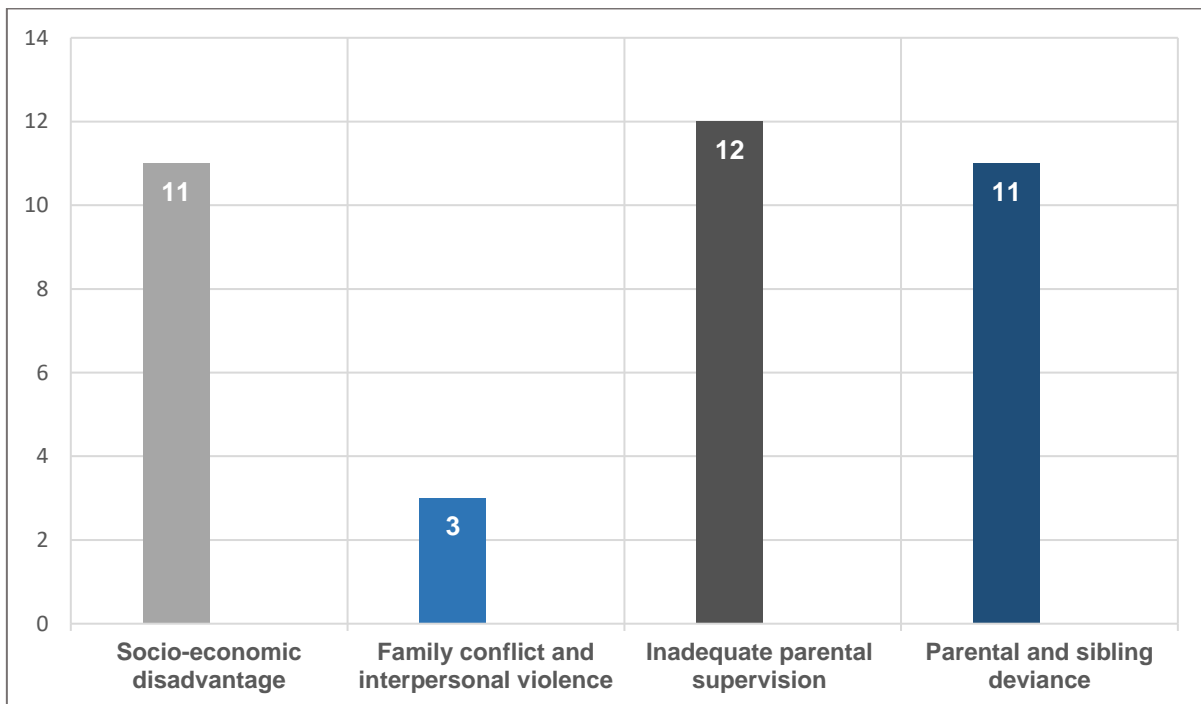


Figure 14: *Family risk factors identified as supportive to unlawful behaviour*³

The risk factors identified by the participants and their unique experiences regarding their exposure to these factors within the family unit followed a similar pattern, as the

³ In Figure 14 a respective participant may have reported multiple socio-criminogenic risk factors within the family unit as factors which contributed to their law-violating behaviour. Thus, the total number of participants (N) and the percentage (%) does not equate to 20 and 100% respectively.

majority of participants in the sample (60%) reported that inadequate parental supervision or after-school care was a prominent factor which motivated them to come into conflict with the law, while 11 participants (55%) reported that socio-economic disadvantage and parental or sibling criminality respectively, contributed to their own law-violating behaviour. However, nine participants (45%) reported exposure to family conflict and interpersonal violence, yet only three participants (15%) identified family conflict as a pertinent contributor to their law-violating behaviour.

Based on the data presented in Figure 13 and Figure 14, it is evident that the findings obtained with reference to the family domain support the research sub-expectations that the majority of youth in the sample would report exposure to socio-economic disadvantage, inadequate parental supervision and parental or sibling deviance; and that they would highlight these factors as contributors to their own unlawful behaviour. However, the findings do not support the sub-expectation formulated on the basis that the majority of the participants would report exposure to family conflict and interpersonal violence. Therefore, the current findings are unsupportive to the research expectation related to risk factors within the family domain, due to the latter not being supported by the findings.

As stated previously, it is crucial to bear in mind that the aim of this study was to identify and explore the socio-criminogenic risk factors to which participants in the sample had been exposed, and to gain a greater understanding of the research participants' experience of these factors. Due to this emphasis on the unique experiences and perceptions of the research participants, the size of the sample and because a control group was not used in the research, these findings are only applicable to youth in the sample and should be regarded as a point of departure for future research. It should also be noted that the specific family risk factors identified by the participants should not be discredited solely on the basis that they do not provide support for the research expectation, as these factors may still be applicable to numerous other youth in conflict with the law, thereby further motivating the need for more research to be conducted on the criminogenic risk factors which promote youth misconduct, as will be discussed further in the succeeding chapter.

Apart from the risk factors discussed in this section, a number of other socio-criminogenic risk factors within the family unit have been reported. However, as no

research expectations were formulated for these respective factors, they form part of the discussion of the findings for which research expectations have not been formulated (see section 6.2.1.). The succeeding section therefore provides an exposition of the findings related to risk factors within the community domain.

6.1.2. Research expectation 2: Socio-criminogenic risk factors within the community domain

This research expectation was formulated on the basis that the majority of research participants exposed to socio-criminogenic risk factors within the community domain will report that the following factors contributed to their law-violating behaviour:

6.1.2.1. Positively orientated civic values and beliefs regarding unlawfulness.

6.1.2.2. Social disorganisation within the community.

6.1.2.3. The abuse of illicit substances.

Prior to exploring the unique factors which participants were exposed to in their communities or neighbourhoods, it was important to first gain an understanding of the areas in which the participants resided before being admitted to the centre. Subsequently, Figure 15 provides an outline of how participants viewed their respective communities.

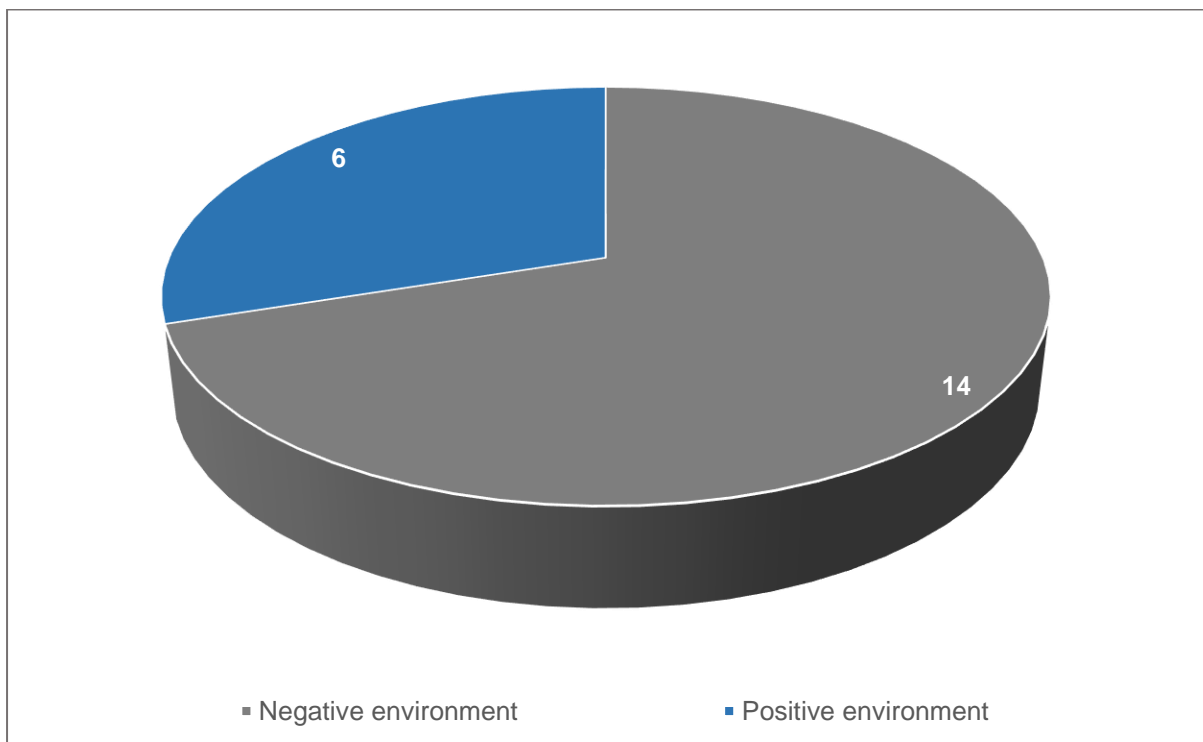


Figure 15: *Participants view of their community or neighbourhood*

The majority of participants in the sample (70%) characterised their community or neighbourhood as a negative environment plagued by social challenges, with only 6 participants (30%) describing their community or neighbourhood as a positive environment with sufficient sport and recreational activities. With reference to the latter, three participants supported their view by stating:

P1: *“The community that I once lived with, they host more of sport activities and recreation activities”.*

P2: *“We have a sports complex and there are events that happen. Now and then, celebrities come there as well – then we go to the sports complex”.*

P17: *“The community is a well surrounded community with some elderly people. It’s a newly relocated community”.*

The 14 participants (70%) who characterised their communities as negative environments supported their views by highlighting issues within the community which they identified as areas for concern. Table 10 provides a synopsis of the challenges these participants identified. As each participant may have identified multiple challenges which in their view made the community a negative environment, the total number of participants (N) and the percentage (%) does not equate to 20 and 100 respectively.

Table 10
Participant descriptions of their respective community or neighbourhood

Description of Community	Number (N)	Percentage %
An area plagued with crime and violence	6	30
An area plagued with substance abuse	6	30
An area severely affected by gangs	5	25
An area with low levels of bonding	3	15

Based on the responses provided by the participants whom described their community as a negative environment, a number of social ills were identified. This included challenges related to the levels of crime and violence within the community (30%), high rates of substance abuse by both youth and adults (30%), gang-related

transgressions (25%) and weak levels of attachment and cohesion amongst community members (15%). Several participants explained the challenges within their communities by stating:

P3: *“The community is full of negativity because there are not much boys playing soccer. They are only focusing on drugs and gangsterism and alcohol”.*

P5: *“It’s a corrupt area because there were gangsters. BTK (Born To Kill) and Roma (Maromas), they were fighting. I was also joining these gangs, the BTK. After joining, that is where I was smoking the drugs”.*

P6: *“There is a drug problem because there are some people selling ‘Ndanda’. Others are selling ‘Cat’ and also alcohol. We have a problem with BTK and Roma there, we are fighting with Roma”.*

P8: *“The community I lived was a very violent community, and I also adapted to that and told myself I want to be like that person one day – to be able to hurt people. The environment also traumatised me through the things I saw. Things that happened in front of me that I learnt from”.*

P10: *“I live in a rural community. It was a very rough community, there were a lot of crimes. People were killed like dogs on the street – and people were raped almost every day, so it were very rough”.*

P11: *“The community, they are very against each other. They don’t live with one another. If you come from prison they like to criticise you, they don’t know if you have changed, if you are a better person. They always criticise you for the things that happened in the past. The community doesn’t support me to come away from crime. It’s almost as if they expect you to commit crime”.*

P14: *“My community is not a nice community because there at my community, small boys are smoking drugs. We influence them, ex-offenders, because a lot of ex-offenders when they come out they are proceeding with gang activities”.*

P15: *“The people around the community, since I came from prison, they always used to tell me bad stuff like the ‘robber is back again’ and that stuff. They are like that. Most of them they don’t like me”.*

From these excerpts, it is apparent that youth from the sample were exposed to a range of undesirable elements within their community. The majority of youth (70%) who characterised their communities as negative, described similar challenges related to violence, substance abuse and gang-related activities, as illustrated in the responses of Participant 3, 5, 6, 8, 10 and 14. It also became clear that in certain cases, the community may potentially increase an adolescent's risk of recidivism as Participants 11 and 15 identified challenges related to the reintegration of youth upon completion of their sentence or when being released on parole, by applying negative labels which may reduce the availability of legitimate opportunities or which may be internalised by youth and form part of their self-image (Tannenbaum, 1938: 19; Williams & McShane, 2014: 115).

As several youth in the sample (30%) referred to their community as a violent environment, it also became apparent that the community may have been a crucial risk factor in terms of reinforcing acts of aggression and unlawfulness. Subsequently, the succeeding section explores the participant's perceptions regarding civic attitudes and beliefs pertaining to law-violating behaviour.

6.1.2.1. Sub-expectation 1: Positively orientated civic values and beliefs regarding unlawfulness

This sub-expectation was formulated on the basis that the majority of youth in the sample would report positively orientated civic values and beliefs regarding unlawfulness as a key factor which motivated them to come into conflict with the law. As noted in Chapter 3, youth residing in communities where crime or violence are regarded as 'normal' or 'acceptable' means with which to gain social or material rewards, may have a higher propensity to engage in misconduct as they may embrace these positively orientated civic values and beliefs regarding unlawfulness (see section 3.3.2.4.). Furthermore, these youth may also learn to imitate the antisocial behaviour displayed within the community, as community members may reinforce the notion that transgressions are viable under certain circumstances or that unlawfulness may be more efficient when striving toward the attainment of material goals (Louw, et. al., 2005: 60). The neighbourhood or community may therefore function as a principal source of learning and as a key risk factor for youth misconduct, particularly in instances where youth frequently see community members being rewarded for

contravening the law, as this may reinforce the idea that the benefits associated with criminality far outweigh the costs. This notion is also supported by the Social Learning perspective of Albert Bandura (see section 2.5.2.2.).

Bezuidenhout (2013: 74) and Pelsier (2008) further substantiate the relationship between youth misconduct and residing in a community with a favourable disposition toward crime, by noting that youth would be more likely to experience decreased levels of social control when crime is condoned within the community. This is particularly alarming with regard to South African youth, who in many instances may already be negatively socialised or marginalised in the family context (Pelsier, 2008). This negative socialisation or marginalisation, in combination with residing in a community who are positively orientated toward crime, may then cultivate a sub-culture of survival where acts such as violence, theft, sexual misconduct and robbery are internalised and regarded as routine behaviour, significantly increasing the risk for youth to transgress (Bezuidenhout, 2013: 75).

With reference to the current study, Figure 16 illustrates the research participants' perception of how people in their respective communities view crime.

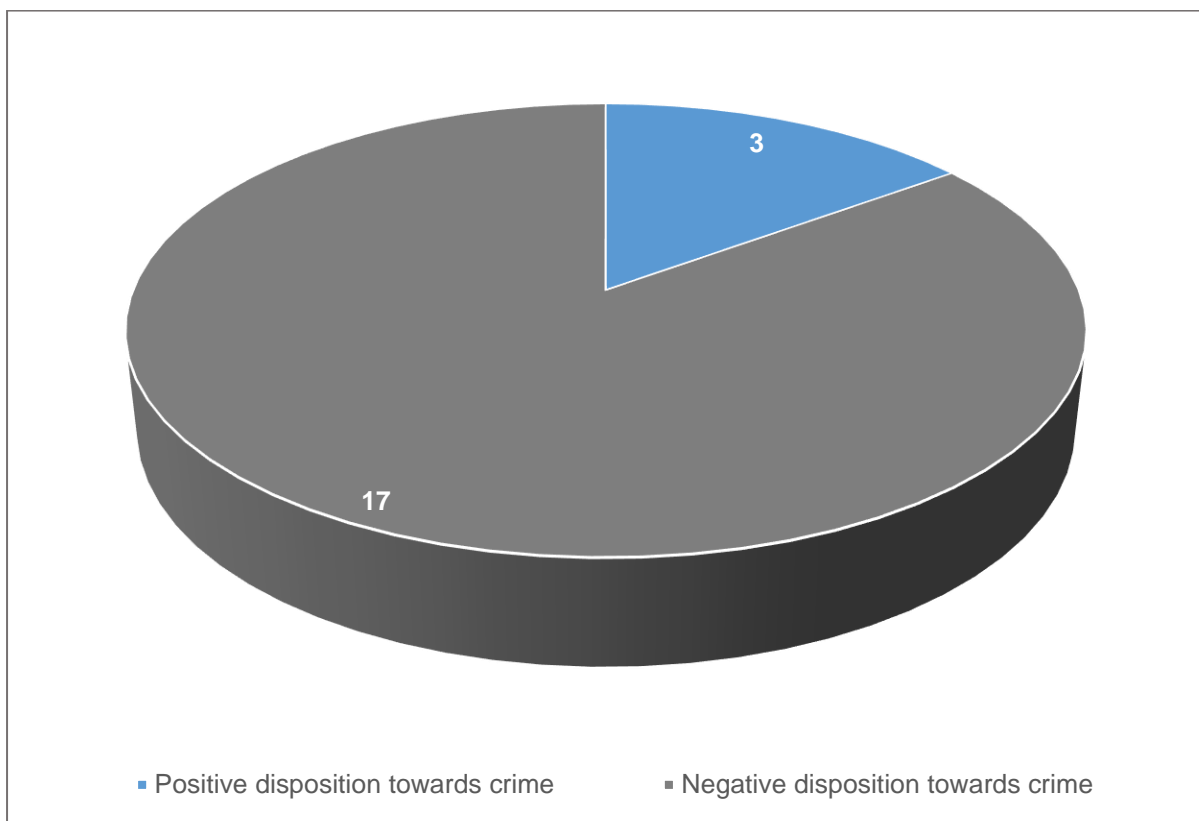


Figure 16: *Participants interpretation of how their community perceives crime*

The majority of participants in the sample (85%) reported that members of their community viewed crime as socially unacceptable behaviour, and displayed an unfavourable disposition toward unlawfulness, irrespective of the existing challenges within the community such as poverty, unemployment and high crime-rates. In this regard, several participants motivated their view as follows:

P1: *“They see crime as something that is wrong, because whenever they see someone do something that is wrong, most of the community members – more especially mothers – they intervene. They call the cops and then they hold a meeting with the community”.*

P3: *“No, my community they don’t see crime as acceptable. They have a problem with crime. They don’t feel comfortable, especially at night because the gangs rob them and stab them”.*

P5: *“No, because when you do something wrong they are coming together and they are going to solve you fast, because they don’t want crime in the community – or they will call police if you run away so that they can show them where you stay so you can be arrested for that crime”.*

P8: *“No. If they accepted crime in the community, they wouldn’t phone the police to say a crime was made. They would just look and say its life’s things”.*

P11: *“No. They will never see crime as acceptable because many people suffer because of it, and they work hard for their things”.*

P14: *“No, my community members are fighting against crime”.*

P19: *“They had a problem with crime. They kept trying to warn us from doing wrong things”.*

In comparison to the responses above, the minority of participants in the sample (15%) believed that their community displayed a positive attitude toward crime, and felt that it was acceptable to contravene the law under certain conditions. These participants motivated their views by stating:

P4: *“The youngsters like it because some of them blame Apartheid, and some because of Xenophobia”.*

P16: *“You will find in our community, some people know their children commit crime. When other people come to complain about these kids, they defend their children – and they know their child does that, but they say their child doesn’t do that. Even if they see their child doing that, they take their child’s part”.*

P20: *“Sometimes they do. Only a few don’t like crime”.*

These participants also identified community attitudes toward crime as a key risk factor for youth misconduct and as a factor which motivated them to transgress by stating that:

P4: *“Yes, because before I committed this crime that led me to prison I saw others in my community winning from crime”.*

P16: *“Some people, more especially the parents of some children – it’s like they supported crime, you see. So I thought later, maybe crime is not that bad”.*

P20: *“Yes, because I saw a lot of people make too much crime quickly to get cash. You didn’t work, you make a crime and you get quickly money. So I also wanted to get money quickly”.*

Based on the responses provided by the proportion of the sample (15%) who identified positively orientated civic values and beliefs toward crime as risk factor for youth misconduct and for their own behaviour, it is clear that these findings support the argument posed by Louw, et. al. (2005: 60) who propose that adolescents may also learn to emulate the antisocial behaviour displayed within the community (as illustrated by the response of P4), as community members may strengthen the notion that crime is viable in certain situations (as illustrated by the response of P16), or that criminality may be more effective when striving toward the attainment of social goals or material success (as illustrated by the response of P20).

However, with reference to the community being positively orientated towards crime, it is evident that this was not highlighted as a key factor for youth misconduct by the majority of the participants, nor was it identified as a factor which motivated the participants to transgress as their respective communities clearly did not approve of crime despite several youths characterising their communities as violent environments plagued by gangs and substance abuse. In total, 17 participants (85%) reported that their respective communities were not favourably orientated toward crime, while the

minority of the participants in the sample (15%) identified the way in which their community perceives crime as a key risk factor for youth misconduct, and as a factor which motivated their own unlawful behaviour. The findings therefore do not correspond with the existing literature, nor do the findings support the research sub-expectation pertaining to positively orientated civic values and beliefs regarding unlawfulness. It should again be noted however, that these findings only pertain to the perceptions and experiences of the sample population and may not necessarily be applicable to the universe of youth in conflict with the law. Civic attitudes and beliefs regarding law-violating behaviour should therefore not be disregarded as a pertinent socio-criminogenic risk factor within the community domain based on the findings in the current research, as it may have been influential in a significant number of other cases where youth transgressed. As a result, this factor should be subjected to further research involving a larger participant sample, participants with a broader age-range and female participants, as will be discussed in the subsequent chapter. The following section presents an exposition of the research findings relating to the participants' perception of their communities or neighbourhoods as socially disorganised areas.

6.1.2.2. Sub-expectation 2: Social disorganisation within the community

The concept *social disorganisation* refers to instances where the community structure is incapable of sustaining social control over the behaviour of youth, due to various challenges within the community. These challenges include a weak level of bonding between community members, residential mobility, ethnic heterogeneity, the community consisting predominantly of female-headed households, providing limited opportunities for conventional success, minimal positive role models and deteriorating infrastructure (Bartollas & Schmallegger, 2013: 54; Kawachi, et. al., 1999: 719; Kubrin & Weitzer, 2003: 374). Subsequently, deviant behaviour may ensue, as a breakdown in the level of social control within civic institutions such as the community is generally congruent with poor supervision of leisure-time activities, the development of youth gangs, inconsistent social norms and increased crime rates (Siegel, 2002: 81; Tierney, 2006: 91; Williams & McShane, 2014: 50). According to this premise, this research sub-expectation was formulated on the basis that the majority of youth in the sample would identify the presence of the aforementioned characteristics associated with social disorganisation in their respective communities, and would regard their community as a motivating factor with reference to their own unlawful behaviour.

Youth residing in socially disorganised communities could also be at an increased risk for contravening the law as these communities would be less likely to monitor and manage the behaviour of youth. Moreover, socially disorganised communities may provide greater opportunities for youth to transgress, offer increased exposure to antisocial role models and maintain weaker levels of attachment to other civic institutions such as the family or school (Emmett, 2001:4). As social disorganisation could not be measured directly, it was decided to assess the presence of the elements characteristic of socially disorganised areas as identified in theory and existing literature. These elements include an inadequate level of supervision within the community, the absence of male role models, limited opportunities for conventional success, weak kinship bonds and an ethnically heterogeneous population (Bartollas & Schmalleger, 2013: 54; Kawachi, et. al., 1999: 719; Kubrin & Weitzer, 2003: 374; Siegel, 2002: 81; Tierney, 2006: 91; Williams & McShane, 2014: 50).

With reference to the aforementioned elements related to socially disorganised communities, research participants were asked to identify the presence of these factors within their own communities. Table 11 presents an exposition of the responses provided by participants in the sample in this regard.

Table 11
Characteristics of social disorganisation identified by participants with reference to their respective communities⁴

Characteristic	Number (N)	Percentage %
Predominantly female-headed households	11	55
Inadequate supervision of the youth	12	60
Limited opportunities for success	12	60
Weak kinship or friendship bonds	11	55
An ethnically heterogeneous area	14	70
An area with minimal positive role models	11	55

⁴ In Table 11, a respective participant may have reported the presence of several elements characteristic of socially disorganised areas. Thus, the total number of participants (N) and the percentage (%) does not equate to 20 and 100 respectively.

Based on the findings presented in Table 11, it could be argued that the majority of youth in the sample may have resided in a socially disorganised community prior to the commission of their current transgression, as these youth acknowledged the presence of several characteristics generally associated with social disorganisation, as identified by Bartollas and Schmallegger (2013: 54), Kawachi, et. al. (1999: 719), Kubrin and Weitzer (2003: 374), Siegel (2002: 81), Tierney (2006: 91) and Williams and McShane (2014: 50). The majority of the research participants (70%) characterised their communities as ethnically heterogeneous areas with inadequate supervision and monitoring of the youth residing there (60%). This was followed by the presence of minimal opportunities for conventional success (60%), weak kinship bonds amongst community members (55%) and the predominant presence of female-headed households (55%). Eleven participants from the sample (55%) also characterised their communities as areas with minimal positive role models from which to acquire or reinforce pro-social behavioural traits.

With reference to the influence of these elements on their own behaviour, Table 12 presents an outline of the number of participants in the sample who identified disorganisation within their communities as a pertinent risk factor which contributed to the commission of their own maladaptive behaviour.

Table 12
Participants who identified community disorganisation as a pertinent risk factor

Perception of youth in the sample	Number (N)	Percentage %
Contributed to unlawful behaviour	12	60
Did not contribute to unlawful behaviour	8	40
Total	20	100

The majority of participants (60%) identified community disorganisation (based on the presence of the elements identified in Table 11) as a key risk factor which motivated them to come into conflict with the law, while eight participants (40%) reported that community disorganisation did not have any significant influence on their behaviour. In this regard, Figure 17 highlights the most pertinent characteristics generally

associated with socially disorganised areas, which the research participants identified as factors which contributed to their current transgression.

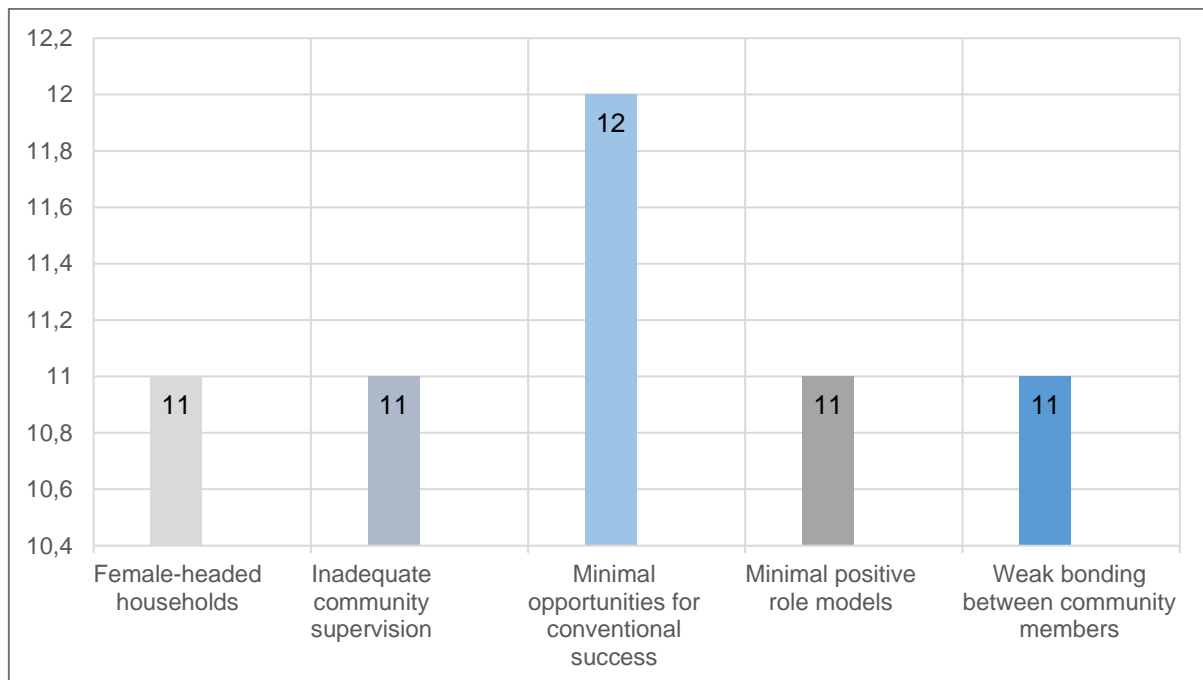


Figure 17: *Characteristics of social disorganisation contributing to misconduct*

Twelve participants from the sample (60%) reported that a lack of opportunities for conventional success motivated them to come into conflict with the law. This is supported by the Differential Opportunity perspective of Cloward and Ohlin (1960: 86), which suggests that youth residing in an area with limited legitimate opportunities to reach their social goals may be motivated to seek out illegitimate opportunities as these opportunities may be more accessible, require less effort and are more efficient in comparison to legitimate means. Restricted access to legitimate opportunities for success may also lead to the formation of deviant subcultures which further increases the risk for youth to transgress (see section 2.3.2.). Elliott, Ageton and Canter (1979: 9) concur and add that restricted access to the resources needed to achieve social goals may also be a source of strain which serves as motivation to come into conflict with the law. In this regard, two participants explained the relationship between their own law-violating behaviour and the lack of opportunities in their community as follows:

P3: *“If there were more opportunities like soccer or libraries there wouldn’t be gangsters in our community because then we will have something to keep us busy, and we see there is something better for us”.*

P18: *“I was under pressure, because when I look for work I don’t find work. If I did then I wouldn’t have committed this crime”.*

Weak levels of attachment between members of the community was identified as a key contributing factor by 11 participants (55%) in the sample. Three participants described their experiences as follows:

P5: *“The community don’t care for one another. When I do something wrong, my neighbour is going to say ‘yes do it’ and now I am thinking it’s nice and right”.*

P14: *“Yes, because if they care for each other and us, they will be supporting us to open some programmes to support us, in order for us to keep busy so that we do not commit crime”.*

P15: *“In the community where I live, they don’t like each other. Even my neighbour, I don’t know is it because of a thing my grandmother did to them in the past which I don’t know about, but I’ve realised that the neighbours they don’t like me at all”.*

Elliott, Ageton and Canter (1979: 17) support these findings by noting that weak levels of attachment between community members may often be indicative of weak levels of bonding between youth and conventional adults in the community. Subsequently, this may influence the level of socialisation of youth, the level of socialisation within the community, and may expose youth to negative role models, all of which may further their risk of contravening the law (see section 2.6.). Inadequate supervision and monitoring of leisure-time activities within the community may have a similar effect on the behaviour of youth, as this may weaken the level of informal social control within the community. In turn, this may limit the degree of youth participation in prosocial community organisations as well as the willingness of community members to intervene when youth are involved in antisocial behaviour, thus increasing the risk for youth to transgress (Kaylen & Pridemore, 2013: 907). A lack of supervision in the community was identified by 11 participants (55%) as a key factor promoting their unlawful behaviour. Three of these participants motivated their view by stating:

P6: *“When big people watch us, they will tell us ‘don’t do the wrong thing’ like drugs – but I didn’t get that”.*

P10: *“If no one is watching you, you see there are a lot of chances to commit crime, like getting involved in car hijacking, robbery and shoplift”.*

P15: *“We sometimes sit by the park then we smoke drugs. Elders will just be walking by, they won’t be stopping and saying ‘stop these things that you are busy with’ or they just stand and encourage us. They will just pass, and while they pass they will say bad things about us, instead of coming to us and stopping us”.*

It was also apparent that the absence of male figures within households in the community, to some extent influenced 11 youth in the sample (55%) to contravene the law. Three youth from the sample explained the influence this has had on their behaviour as follows:

P1: *“Yes, because my father for him being in prison it affected me. I could not make decisions on my own. I always included my friends, the gangs”.*

P3: *“The absent fathers. That influenced my behaviour because always where there is a father, there will be rules. Where there is no father rules are less and then you will not respect your mother because she is a woman and a father is not there for you”.*

P8: *“I can say that because I saw there were many homes without a father, just the young son. So this young son, he is now going to become the father figure”.*

The absence of male role models in the community may also motivate youth to seek out gangs which serve as a surrogate family and from which they can model behaviour for the male role (Arthur, 2007: 17). This is supported by the current findings as 11 youth (55%) ascribed their maladaptive behaviour in part to the absence of positive role models in their community. Subsequently, this led the participants to view gang members as role models, mimicking the unlawful and violent behaviour displayed by these individuals. Two participants from the sample explained this by stating:

P3: *“Role models also played a role because you need to have something to look out for so that you can have a future and say ‘that one, I want to look like that person’. So there wasn’t so much role models that I can say I want to look like that person in future to come, only the gangs”.*

P8: *“There is also few role models that we can look up to and say ‘I want to be like that one day, I want to finish school, I want to go study – maybe in Pretoria or Joburg,*

to have a good life. We saw the gangs as role models, because we also want to be respected there where we go. People must look at me and say 'I don't want to mess with that guy because I can get hurt'. I wanted people to be scared of me. That was one of our weak points”.

Based on the findings presented in this section, it is apparent that the level of social disorganisation within the community may be regarded as a pertinent factor contributing to youth misconduct as elements indicative of socially disorganised areas were identified by the majority of youth in the sample with reference to their own communities. These elements included residing in ethnically diverse areas which offer divergent norms and values for different cultural groups (70%), inadequate community-level supervision of youth (60%), minimal opportunities to achieve conventional success (60%), an absence of male role models (55%) and weak kinship bonds (55%). Based on their own experiences, the majority of youth in the sample (60%) also reported the level of social disorganisation within their community as a factor which motivated them to transgress. The findings therefore provide support for the sub-expectation that the majority of youth in the sample would report social disorganisation as key risk factor for youth misconduct and as a factor motivating their own behaviour.

The subsequent section provides the findings related to the abuse of alcohol and illicit substances in the communities in which the participants resided prior to their admission to the centre.

6.1.2.3. Sub-expectation 3: The use of alcohol and illicit substances

This research sub-expectation was formulated on the basis that the majority of participants in the sample would identify the use of alcohol or illicit substances within their respective communities, and would report this as a motivating factor for their own behaviour. According to Bartol and Bartol (2017: 490) the use and abuse of alcohol and illicit substances can be regarded as one of the most significant concerns in contemporary society. Illicit substance abuse may also significantly increase the risk for youth to transgress, as areas with high consumption rates generally offer a myriad of lucrative opportunities for unlawful behaviour. These include opportunities related to drug production and trade, the bribery of state officials, theft and violence (Bezuidenhout, 2013: 53).

Whilst under the influence of illicit substances, youth may also be more likely to succumb to peer pressure, display poor judgement or engage in sensation-seeking, impulsive and reckless behaviour. The risk of alcohol and illicit substance abuse is also significantly increased when these substances are easily acquired or regularly used in the community. In this regard, Table 13 presents an exposition of participant views concerning the availability and use of alcohol and illicit substances in their community.

Table 13
Participant views regarding the availability and use of alcohol and illicit substances in their community

Available in Community	Number (N)	Percentage %
Alcohol/Drugs were freely available	15	75
Alcohol/Drugs were not freely available	5	25
Total	20	100
Used in Community	Number (N)	Percentage %
Alcohol/Drugs were frequently used	19	95
Alcohol/Drugs were not frequently used	1	5
Total	20	100

The majority of participants in the sample (75%) reported that alcohol and illicit substances were freely available in their community, in comparison to five participants (25%) who reported that alcohol and illicit substances were not available in the areas in which they resided. However, 19 participants (95%) reported that alcohol and illicit substances were used regularly in their respective communities. This discrepancy was clarified by four participants from the sample (20%) who reported that although illicit substances were used regularly in their communities, these substances were not freely available and were usually acquired at other “locations”⁵ or neighbourhoods in close proximity to where they resided. The research participants also identified the use

⁵ The term “location” is a slang term used to refer to an informal settlement.

of several different types of substances used in their respective communities. These are outlined in Figure 18 below.

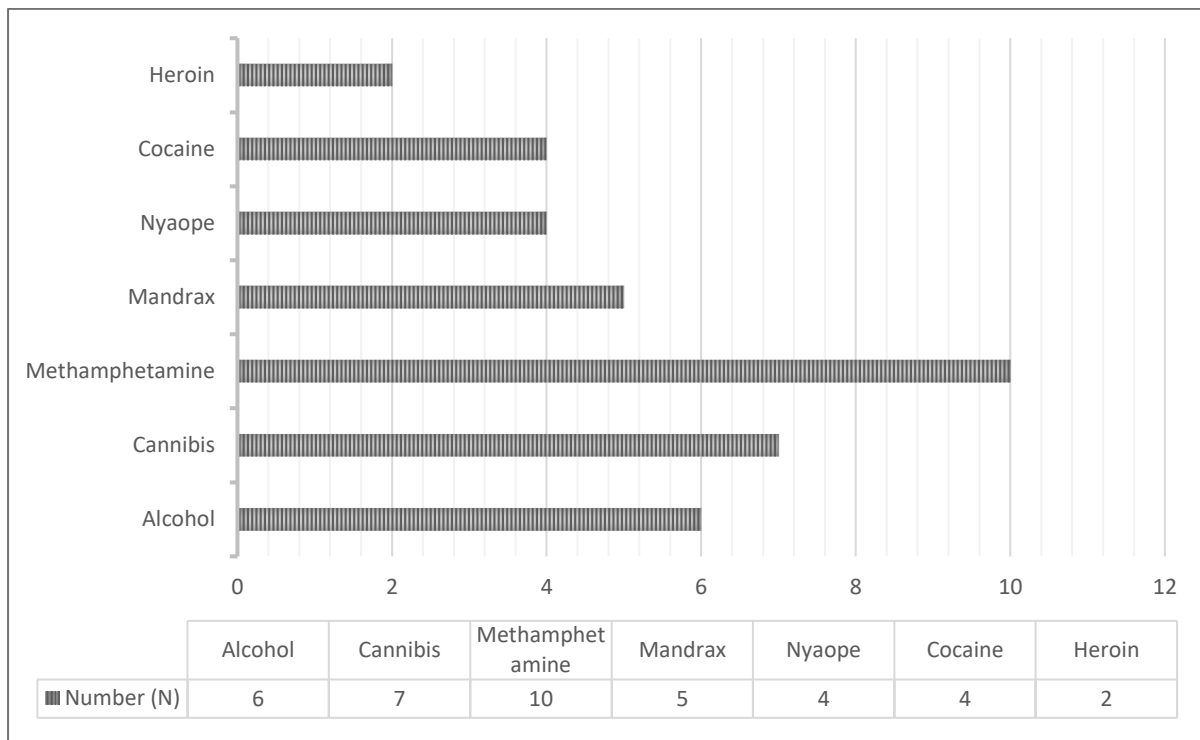


Figure 18: *An exposition of the type of substances used*

Based on the findings presented in Figure 18, Methamphetamine or “Tik” was the substance most often used, as reported by the majority of participants in the sample (50%). This was followed by the use of Cannabis (35%), Mandrax (25%), “Nyaope”⁶ (20%) and Cocaine (20%). Two participants (10%) also reported that Heroin was regularly used in the area in which they resided. With reference to the relationship between youth misconduct and the availability and use of illicit substances in the community, 12 participants from the sample (60%) ascribed their involvement in law-violating behaviour to their own use or abuse of the substances highlighted in Figure 18, as well as to the availability and use of these substances in their communities. The respective participants reported the following in this regard:

P2: *“Yes, I used drugs and alcohol before committing crime – cocaine and mandrax. The times I abused drugs and alcohol I didn’t worry, I just did what I wanted, and so I committed crime. I didn’t think about the consequences.”*

⁶ Nyaope refers to a contemporary drug unique to South Africa. It is also commonly referred to as ‘sugars’ or ‘pinch’ and is a mixture of cannabis and heroin. Nyaope is often also mixed with bicarbonate of soda, household cleaner or rat poison (Bezuidenhout, 2013: 53).

P6: *“Yes, because I was addicted. When I want another one, I cannot sleep. I rolling in the bed. I must maybe go rob other people”.*

P8: *“Yes, because I saw what these people are doing. They are making a living for them, and for us to need it is a nice feeling, so I also smoked drugs. I started to sell to see can I also make a living, because there is many unemployed in our community. I saw I also made money, but that money was just for me to buy clothes and give money for my family. I was also under the influence when I did this crime. The day I did this murder, I was under the influence of alcohol. It was because of that – and I never slept, that’s why I was like that. You also find a lot of people there that say when they do crime they are under the influence of drugs and alcohol. Not thinking properly. Sober minded, they will not do that things because they will know the consequences they must face. So what I can say is its drugs and alcohol”.*

P9: *“Yes, because I want to fit my hobby you see. So I’m going to commit the crime so that I can get the money to buy the drugs”.*

P10: *“Yes, seeing someone that is very high and floating, I said to myself that I also want to experience that feeling. I was also under the influence of drugs when I committed the crime”.*

P11: *“Because it is sold in my community. If it was not sold there then the young people would not be using those things. Then they wouldn’t have ended up like that, going to prison and so on. It’s because of the drug dealers that came into our community”.*

P13: *“I smoked a lot. That’s what made me commit crime. There wasn’t a day I didn’t smoke. When I started using drugs, I stopped helping my family with money because I was just with my friends”.*

P14: *“Yes, I think so because when I don’t have drugs I need to rob someone to get a money in order to buy some drugs. I was using drugs with the gang as well”.*

P15: *“Yes, because it was becoming like an everyday kind of thing that I must smoke drugs. We would commit crime just to get the money so that we could smoke drugs. We would rob people, we would steal. Sometimes I would even go to town just to make shoplifting and to break into people’s cars”.*

P20: *“Yes, I was smoking three drugs that day, and when I get money I smoking a rock. After smoking the rock I smoke weed, after weed I drink. Then I committed the crime, for more drugs and more alcohol, and to get food. I think I’m a starring (boss) when I smoke drugs, but now I see it’s not so”.*

Based on these findings, it is apparent that the availability and frequent use of illicit substances can be regarded as a key risk factor which motivated the unlawful behaviour of the majority of youth in the sample (60%). These findings concur with the research findings of Siegel (2002: 38) which indicate that roughly 19% of incarcerated Australian youth and 50% of British Columbian youth have reported using illicit substances. The findings also correspond with the research of Harder, et. al. (2015: 1059), in which illicit substance use was identified as one of the three most prevalent risk factors for youth in their sample prior to being admitted to secure residential care (see section 3.3.2.3.). These findings are also supported by Benekos and Merlo (2009: 97) who confirm that youth who use illicit substances have a higher propensity to come into conflict with the law, have higher arrest rates and display a greater level of criminal versatility.

The relationship between illicit substance use and youth misconduct is further substantiated by the Anomie perspective of Merton (1938) and the Differential Opportunity perspective of Cloward and Ohlin (1960), which postulate that youth may adapt to the strain experienced in their environment by withdrawing from society and retreating to alcohol or other illicit substances. In so doing, youth have a higher probability of contravening the law as they may become addicted and transgress in order to acquire alcohol or illicit substances, as supported by the response of Participants 6, 9, 13, 14, 15 and 20. The availability and use of illicit substances in the community may also create lucrative opportunities to acquire material success through the drug trade as supported by the response of Participant 8, or may lead to youth experimenting with these substances themselves as illustrated in the response of Participant 10 and Participant 11. Furthermore, the use of alcohol or illicit substances also impair the judgement of the user and may make them oblivious to the consequences associated with transgressing, as indicated by the response of Participant 2.

From the findings presented in this section, it is apparent that youth may be at an increased risk when residing in a community where alcohol and other illicit substances are freely available or in communities where these substances are frequently used. In the current study, the majority of participants in the sample (75%) reported that alcohol and illicit substances were freely available in their community and 19 participants (95%) indicated that these substances were used regularly in the areas in which they resided. With reference to their own behaviour, the majority of participants in the sample (60%) also highlighted the availability and use of alcohol and illicit substances as influential in the commission of their own law-violating behaviour. These findings therefore support the research sub-expectation pertaining to the availability and frequent use of alcohol and illicit substances in the community as it was supported by more than 50% of the sample.

Figure 19 provides a summary of the most influential criminogenic risk factors reported by the participants with reference to their community or neighbourhood.

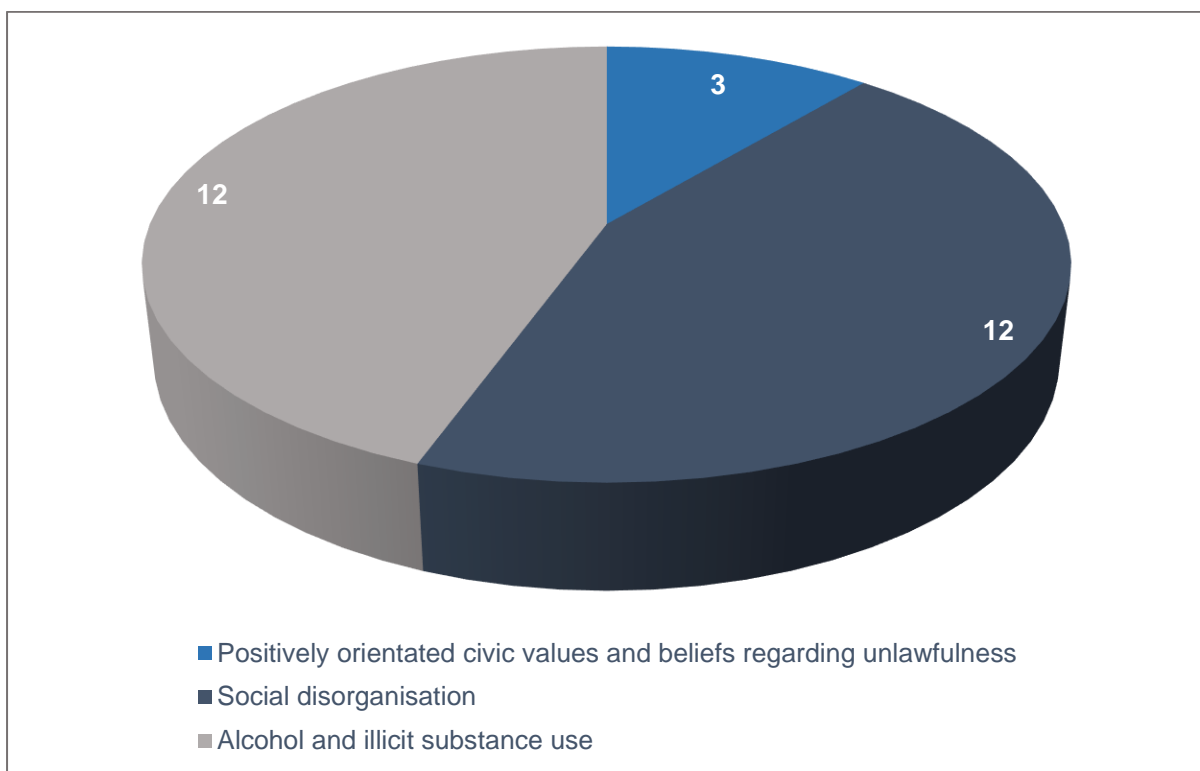


Figure 19: *Community risk factors identified as supportive to unlawful behaviour*

The majority of participants in the sample (60%) identified social disorganisation and the availability and frequent use of alcohol and illicit substances (60%) as factors which contributed to the commission of their unlawful behaviour, thus supporting the second

and third research sub-expectations. However, the first sub-expectation is not supported by the research findings as positively orientated civic values and beliefs regarding unlawfulness was reported by less than 50% of participants in the sample (15%). Therefore the findings obtained do not provide support for the research expectation pertaining to risk factors within the community context, due to the latter sub-expectation not being supported.

It should be noted that the specific community-level risk factors identified by the participants cannot be discredited solely on the basis that they do not provide support for the research expectation, as these factors may still be applicable to countless other youth in conflict with the law. Due to the exploratory nature of the current study, the sample size and because a control group was not used, these findings should thus be regarded as solely applicable to the participants in the sample and should be seen as a factor motivating the need for further research to be conducted on the community-level risk factors which contribute to the marginalisation of youth, and which place them at risk of contravening the law.

Several other socio-criminogenic risk factors within the community domain were also identified by participants in the sample. These factors form part of the discussion of the findings for which research expectations have not been formulated (see section 6.2.2.). The subsequent section therefore provides an account of the findings related to socio-criminogenic risk factors within the school context.

6.1.3. Research expectation 3: Socio-criminogenic risk factors within the school domain

This research expectation was formulated on the basis that the majority of research participants exposed to socio-criminogenic risk factors within the school domain will report that the following factors contributed to them coming into conflict with the law:

- 6.1.3.1. Poor academic performance.
- 6.1.3.2. Truancy and dropping out of school.
- 6.1.3.3. Weak levels of attachment to school.

As indicated in Figure 5 (see section 5.6.) two participants from the sample (10%) had completed their schooling career prior to the commission of their current transgression. The findings related to criminogenic risk factors within the school domain, as

presented in the succeeding sections are therefore only applicable to the remaining 18 youth in the sample.

6.1.3.1. Sub-expectation 1: Poor academic performance

This research sub-expectation was formulated on the premise that the majority of youth in the sample would identify academic failure as a risk factor for youth misconduct and as a pertinent factor which motivated them to contravene the law. According to Siegel (2002: 215) and Bartollas and Schmalleger (2013: 124), youth who perform poorly at school may be at an increased risk to come into conflict with the law, as academic failure may lead to feelings of frustration or rejection which could create the idea that success through socially approved means is unattainable. These youth may then seek out like-minded peers who have had similar experiences with reference to academic failure, and together they may create other means with which to achieve status or feel valued (Siegel, 2002: 215).

Williams and McShane (2014: 97) concur, and note that the frustration experienced by adolescents due to their inability to achieve status through conventional means such as being successful at school, may promote the formation of deviant sub-cultures or youth gangs, which may further increase the risk for youth to contravene the law. Poor academic performance or academic failure is generally also associated with a decrease in the number of legitimate opportunities to acquire material success. In turn, this restriction on conventional avenues to success may motivate youth to seek out illegitimate opportunities in order to reach their social goals or to acquire status. Moreover, poor academic performance may lead to feelings of aversion toward school, the rejection of the school's authority and ultimately to a greater probability that youth will perpetrate deviant acts (Bartollas & Schmalleger, 2013: 125; Cloward & Ohlin, 1960: 131; Vetter & Silverman, 1986: 322; Williams, 2012: 358; Williams & McShane, 2014: 100).

With reference to the current study, Figure 20 presents the proportion of youth in the sample who identified poor academic achievement or academic failure as a pertinent risk factor which influenced their behaviour and which motivated them to come into conflict with the law.

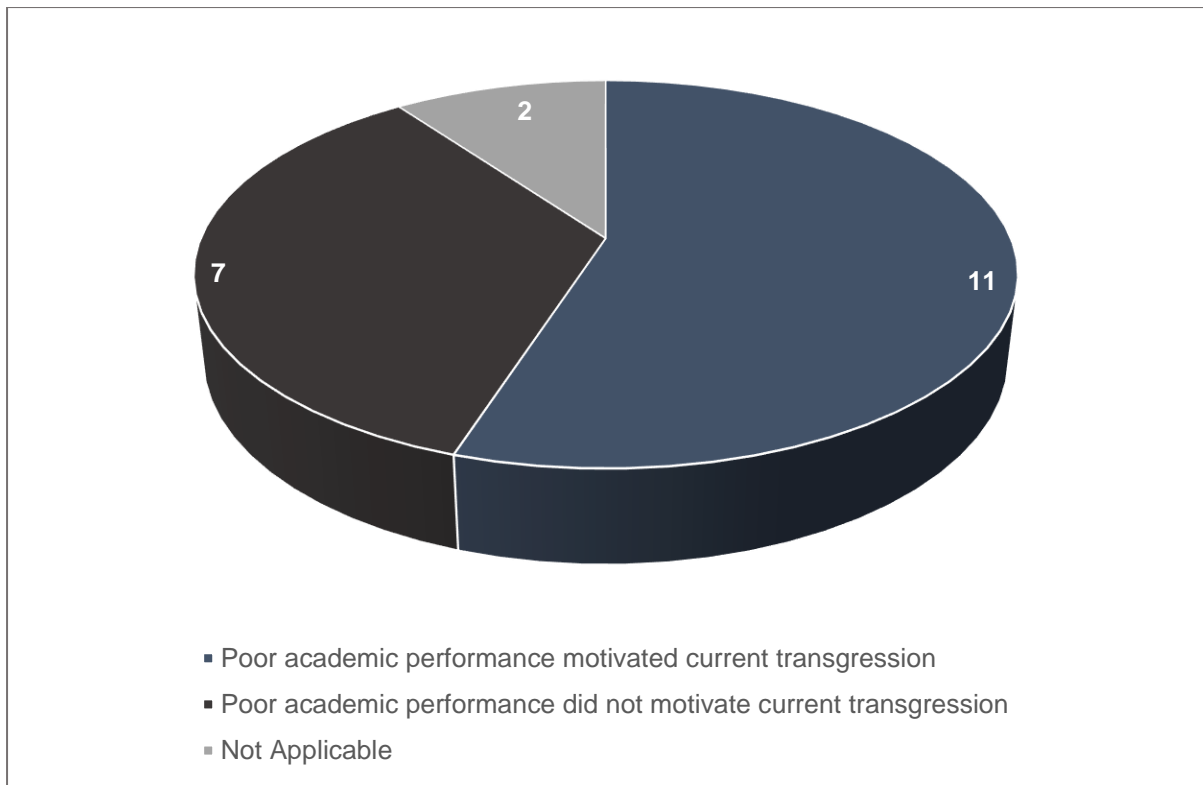


Figure 20: *Participants who identified poor academic performance as a key risk factor*

Eleven participants in the sample (55%) identified poor academic performance or academic failure as a pertinent risk factor which contributed to them contravening the law. The remaining seven participants (35%) felt that academic failure did not contribute to the commission of their current transgression and two participants (10%) had completed school prior to the commission of their current transgression. Several participants described their level of academic performance as follows:

P3: *“I wasn’t that much excellent”.*

P10: *“It was very low”.*

P13: *“I only passed two subjects”.*

P20: *“My marks were not too much good. When I went to Grade 10, I leave school”.*

These findings correspond with international research findings obtained from several longitudinal studies, which indicate that youth who display poor academic performance are more vulnerable in terms of engaging in maladaptive behaviour and law violations in comparison to youth who perform at an adequate or remarkable level (Sutherland, 2011: 1). The findings obtained in the current study also correspond with the research of Barnert, et. al. (2015: 1365) in which participants reported that poor academic

performance “sets youth on a bad pathway” potentially leading to frustration, feelings of low self-worth and involvement in deviant peer groups. The latter is also supported in the findings from the current study, as four participants (20%) from the sample ascribed their academic failure to the association with deviant peer groups or to their involvement in gang-related activities at school and in their community. In this regard, the participants reported:

P1: *“My marks were good. Then my marks were going down because I was concentrating more on gangsterism activities. After that I did not worry that much about school”.*

P2: *“The reason I did poorly at school is because most of the people I hanged with had finished school or they were chased [expelled] from school. So I always thought it was best if I was with them and not at school”.*

P8: *“I did well until I got involved with gangs. I eventually also left school to be with my gang”.*

P15: *“I was already involved in gang-related stuff, so I used to go with drugs to school to smoke with my friends. My marks were good until this gang stuff”.*

The findings above support the findings obtained by Siegel (2002: 215); Bartollas and Schmallegger (2013: 124) and Williams and McShane (2014: 97), which highlight the interrelation between gang membership and poor academic achievement. In this regard, it may be possible that youth in the sample found it difficult to achieve status or acquire recognition through conventional avenues such as doing well at school, and subsequently looked for other means to achieve the desired status or feel valued. The findings obtained in the current study also support the sub-expectation related to academic failure, as more than 50% of youth in the sample (55%) identified poor academic performance as a risk factor for youth misconduct and as a factor which contributed to them coming into conflict with the law. Based on the responses provided by the participants, it also became apparent that academic failure and truancy or dropping out of school was interrelated. The latter is discussed in the succeeding section.

6.1.3.2. Sub-expectation 2: Truancy and dropping out of school

Truancy and dropping out of school is also regarded as a pertinent predictor for youth misconduct as it may restrict the number of legitimate opportunities available to youth, provide them with more freedom to associate with deviant peers and to experiment with alcohol and illicit substances. Staying absent from school also presents youth with more leisure time in which to engage in other forms of high-risk or sensation-seeking behaviour (Chaiken, 2000: 9). Bezuidenhout (2013: 81) supports this by asserting that learners who are frequently absent from school, who drop out or who are expelled from school, spend the majority of their time in the community without supervision as many caregivers work outside of the home. This leisure time, in combination to the lack of supervision and the unavailability of structured activities and care, may then increase their susceptibility to contravene the law.

This sub-expectation was therefore formulated on the basis that the majority of participants would report frequent absenteeism from school and that the majority of youth in the sample would indicate that they had dropped out of school. Furthermore, the sub-expectation was formulated on the premise that the majority of participants would identify truancy and dropping out of school as a factor which contributed to their own law-violating behaviour. In this regard, the proportion of youth in the sample who reported truancy and dropping out of school are represented in Table 14 and Table 15 respectively.

Table 14

Participants who reported frequent occurrences of truancy from school

	Number (N)	Percentage %
Often played truant or stayed absent	13	65
Seldom played truant or stayed absent	5	25
Not Applicable	2	10
Total	20	100

The majority of participants in the sample (65%) reported frequent occurrences of truancy or absenteeism from school. Five participants in the sample (25%) reportedly

seldom stayed absent from school and two participants (10%) had completed school prior to committing the current transgression for which they are serving a sentence. Table 15 presents an exposition of the number of participants who reported dropping out of school prior to contravening the law.

Table 15
Participants who reported dropping out of school

	Number (N)	Percentage %
Dropped out of school	11	55
Did not drop out of school	7	35
Not Applicable	2	10
Total	20	100

Eleven participants (55%) reported dropping out of school prior to the commission of their current transgression, while seven participants in the sample (35%) indicated that they did not drop out of school despite their participation in unlawful behaviour and gang-related activities. Two participants (10%) completed school before coming into conflict with the law. These findings support the research findings of Khan and Singh (2014: 111) in which 92.3% of participants in the sample left school prior to coming into conflict with the law. The findings also correspond with the research of Christle, et. al. (2005:70) which indicate a correlation between youth misconduct and truancy, suspension and dropping out of school, as these factors reportedly led to a “failure cycle” which limits opportunities to acquire academic skills and learn prosocial behaviour.

Many factors may contribute to the decision to leave school. These factors include academic failure, low levels of attachment to school, school-based violence and bullying, economic difficulties and deviant peer group association. Table 16 presents an exposition of the factors which contributed to youth in the sample deciding to drop out of school. As more than one factor may have motivated a respective participant to drop out of school, the total number of participants (N) and the percentage (%) does not equate to 20 and 100 respectively.

Table 16
Factors which contributed to dropping out of school

Contributing Factor	Number (N)	Percentage %
Gang involvement	8	40
Issues with authority	2	10
Illicit substance use or abuse	4	20
Bullying or violence at school	4	20
Academic failure	2	10

The majority of youth who reported dropping out of school (40%), cited their involvement in gangs or gang-related activities as the primary reason why they decided to leave school. Three youth from the sample motivated their view by stating:

P1: *“When I took that decision I felt it was normal. I didn’t even worry about my sister or someone else. I was getting instruction from someone with high ranks in the gang, so it was normal”.*

P8: *“It contributed to my behaviour becoming worse, not wanting to go to school and so on. Also, the gang made me not feel like facing teachers who want to lecture me. So I felt I am not going back to school”.*

P14: *“Because of gangs I leave school. There was a lot of pressure. When I want to go to school they call me and say ‘brother it’s time now, we must go to the bus stop and stand there’ waiting for some other guys to rob at the bus rank”.*

Apart from the involvement in gangs or gang-related activities, four youth from the sample (20%) cited the use of illicit substances as the primary reason why they decided to leave school. In this regard, participants reported:

P3: *“I was wasting time going to school. I came in the class when I was high, smoking dagga. I was once also found with dagga in my school bag, and a knife”.*

P10: *“The time when I must go to school, some of my friends will come with a packet of drugs. Then it’s like I must go to school and I must go to smoke – and then I decide to drop the school and go and smoke. It also contributed to my crime”.*

P20: *“I dropped out of school because of drugs, I liked drugs too much. When I get R50, even if I have no food at home, I go to smoke the drugs. After smoking, I feel why I didn’t buy the food first. Then I make the crime to get food money and for more drugs”.*

Several other factors which contributed to the participants’ decision to drop out of school were also identified. Four participants (20%) cited school-based violence and bullying as key factors which motivated their decision to drop out of school. Other factors identified by participants included experiencing issues with authority figures at school (10%), as well as challenges related to their academic performance (10%).

These findings support the Social Control perspective of Hirschi (1969) which postulates that youth who report higher rates of truancy or who drop out of school may have more free time and energy available, thus increasing their risk to transgress. This notion is substantiated by one participant who acknowledges that:

P11: *“Teachers would ask me where I was when I stayed away from school for a day or two. That’s the time I was doing naughty things. When I was at school, I had a tight schedule going to school and coming from school. There wasn’t time to walk around. I got homework, that sort of thing”.*

In addition to providing youth with more free time and energy, lower levels of social control are present when youth are not committed to or involved in prosocial activities such as attending school, as this lack of commitment and involvement weakens the level of bonding between the adolescent and conventional society. Furthermore, Hirschi (1969: 22) argues that youth who spend the majority of their time engaging in prosocial behaviour such as school or sport, have a stronger bond to conventional society and are thus at significantly lower risk of coming into conflict with the law in comparison to youth who stay absent from or drop out of school, as these youth would be less subjected to necessary levels of social control and would have more free time and energy available with which to engage in antisocial behaviour. This premise is supported in the current findings, as several participants felt that their probability of transgressing would be significantly lower had they opted to remain in school.

Participant 2 and Participant 7 supported this by stating:

P2: *“If I had stayed in school, I wouldn’t have committed this crime – but I didn’t like school”.*

P7: *“I felt like maybe if I have a peace job I can show people maybe I can make something – but since I left school, I spend a lot of time with my friends that have finished school or who also left school. Maybe if I was in school the community wouldn’t accuse me so much”.*

Youth who are frequently absent from school or who decide to drop out of school may also be more vulnerable in terms of transgressing, as they may be subjected to negative labelling practices within the family or community contexts. This may further perpetuate maladaptive behaviour as negative labels may be internalised by youth, who may then alter their behaviour to suite the negative label (Tannenbaum, 1938: 19; Sutherland, 2011: 5; Williams & McShane, 2014: 115). This notion is also substantiated by the response of Participant 7 above, who identified negative labelling practices within the community as a key factor which contributed to his own law-violating behaviour. Moreover, the findings presented with reference to truancy and dropping out of school support the research sub-expectation as the majority of participants in the sample identified truancy (65%) and dropping out of school (55%) as risk factors for youth misconduct and as factors which in part, contributed to their own unlawful behaviour.

6.1.3.3. Sub-expectation 3: Weak levels of attachment to school

As discussed in the preceding sections, poor academic performance, high rates of truancy and dropping out of school may be regarded as pertinent risk factors for youth misconduct, as the schooling experience is instrumental to the moral and cognitive development of youth (Ntshangase, 2015: 41). However, poor academic performance may also lead youth to become detached from school or to youth becoming demotivated to attend school. Subsequently, this may create feelings of dislike toward school, lead to youth rejecting the school’s authority and ultimately, neutralise the efficiency of the school as a secondary socialisation agent, further increasing the risk for youth to transgress (Bartollas & Schmallegger, 2013: 125; De Souza da Silveira, et. al., 2012: 353; Hawkins, et. al. 2000: 5; Khan & Singh, 2014: 113; McCord, et. al., 2001: 83; Shader, 2001: 4).

This research sub-expectation was therefore formulated on the basis that the majority of youth in the sample would report weak levels of attachment to school, citing this as a factor which contributed to them contravening the law. In this regard, the level of motivation to attend school, the nature of the learner-educator relationship, and the perception of youth regarding their experiences at school may be regarded as key indicators in terms of their level of attachment to school. With reference to the aforementioned factors, Figure 21 presents an exposition of the level of motivation to attend school based on the findings obtained in the current study.

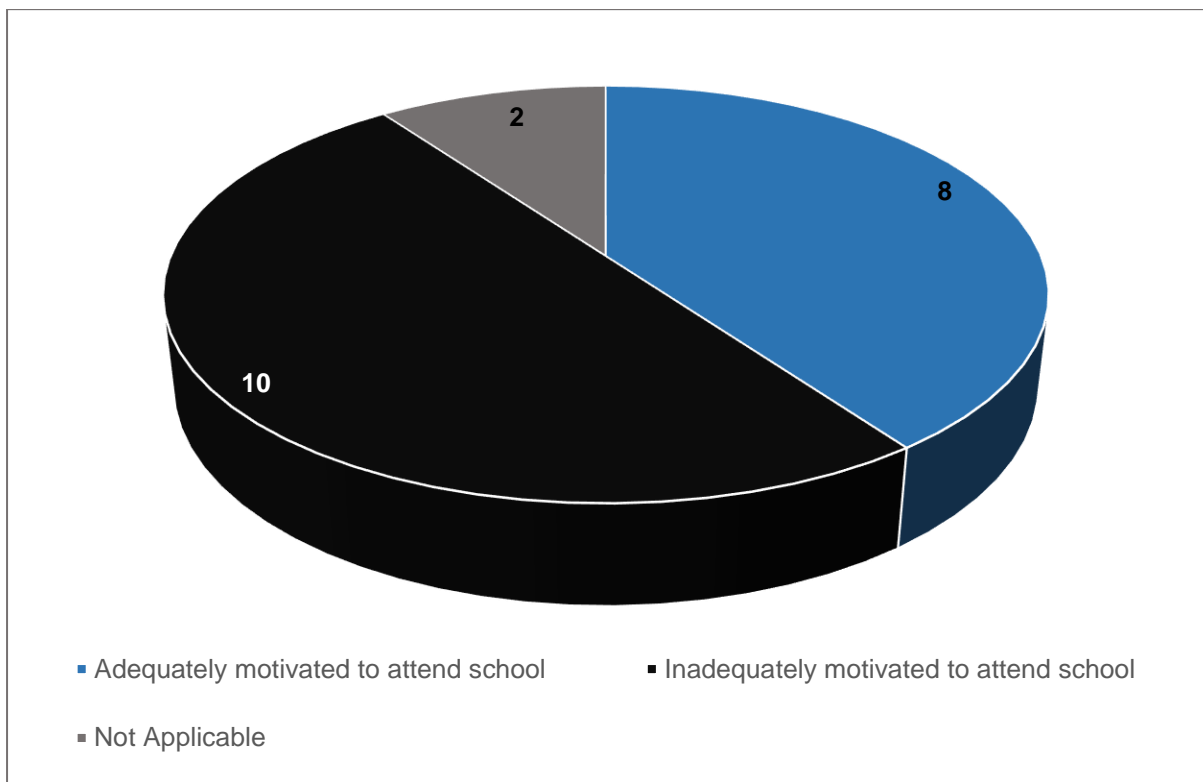


Figure 21: *Participants level of motivation to attend school*

The majority of participants in the sample (50%) reported being inadequately motivated to attend school, in comparison to eight participants (40%) who reported adequate motivation to attend school. Two participants from the sample (10%) had completed school prior to coming into conflict with the law. Gang membership and the involvement in gang-related activities were identified as a reason for being inadequately motivated to attend school by two participants in the sample, who motivated their view by disclosing:

P8: *“There were many times I didn’t want to go to school. My heart was not at school, it was with the gang – to hurt people’s kids to be able to get an image”.*

P19: *"I don't like school. My behaviour was bad because of my friends, the gang. I was also chased away from school because of being naughty".*

Apart from being involved in gang-related activities, the trade and use of alcohol and illicit substances were identified as another key reason why youth in the sample felt demotivated to attend school or to participate in activities offered by the school. Two participants explained their experience by stating:

P15: *"I went to school every day, but not because I liked to be at the school. I went every day for the wrong reasons. I used to go to school with a lot of drugs, to go and sell to the children there at school".*

P20: *"My motivation to go to school was not so good most of the time. The times when my mother give me money, I take my bag and make like I'm going to school – and after that I run away from the school. I go to smoke drugs with my friends, tablets and dagga (cannabis)".*

One participant from the sample identified the treatment he received from educators at his school as the reason he felt demotivated to attend school, by disclosing that:

P11: *"My motivation to go to school was very poor. The teachers were the problem for me. They always told us we only come to school for the SASSA pay (social grant). I felt like they didn't care for us or for our future. Then I decided to leave school because I was not dependent on SASSA pay. My mother also went to see the teachers about this".*

With reference to the response above, Sutherland (2011: 4) notes that the effect of maltreatment by educators may be as detrimental to the behaviour of youth as exposure to school-based violence and bullying. In this sense, maltreatment would include more obvious forms such as harsh disciplinary practices and sexual harassment, as well as more subtle forms such as sarcasm or verbal assaults. In both forms, maltreatment may reduce the level of attachment to school and may cause learners to rebel against rules set by the school, as is evident in the response of Participant 11.

Following a similar pattern as the participants' level of motivation to attend school, 11 youth in the sample (55%) reported having negative or "bad" relationships with

educators at their school. Several research participants explained the nature of the relationship with educators at their school as follows:

P4: *“The teachers liked to push us down by telling us we will not pass and looking down on us”.*

P7: *“It was not so good”.*

P9: *“Most of them were a bad relationship because we couldn’t talk to each other. This made me have an attitude towards them”.*

P10: *“It was negative. When they give me advice, I just think I don’t care and I will do what is right for me”.*

Aside from the level of motivation to attend school and the nature of the relationship with educators, the general perception youth have of school may also be indicative of low levels of bonding to school. In this regard, youth were requested to reflect on their general experiences and perceptions of school prior to their admission to the centre. These findings are presented in Figure 22.

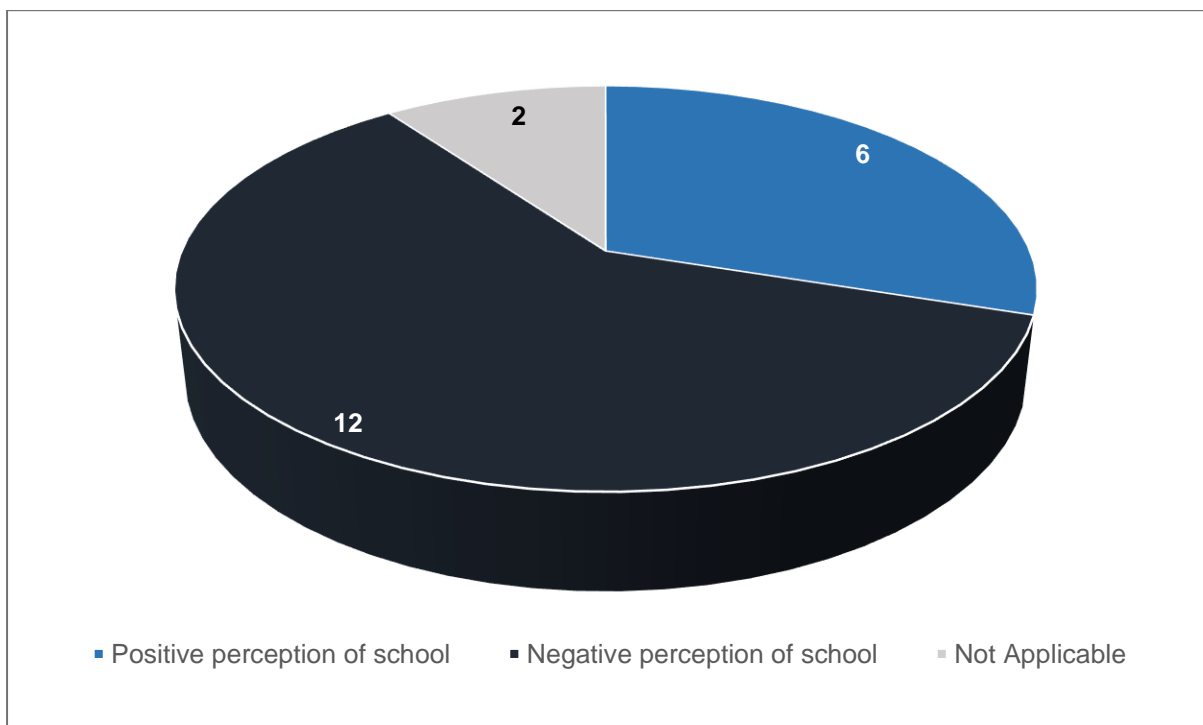


Figure 22: *Participant perceptions regarding their schooling experience*

Twelve participants (60%) described their experience at school as being generally negative. In addition to disclosing that school has had a negative influence on their

lives, participants cited school-based violence, gang-membership, illicit substance use on the school premises and peer pressure as reasons why they often experienced feelings of discontent toward school. Excerpts from this phase in the interview are provided in the section below:

P2: *“Negative, because my friends were not there”.*

P7: *“Negative, because I was on and off in school”.*

P9: *“It was negative because there was negative things that the teenagers did at school like the violence – and when they use drugs”.*

P10: *“A negative, because the school I was put in was not the school that I was meant to be there because that school is full of peer pressurising”.*

P15: *“It was negative because there were all sorts of wrong stuff like gangsterism. There by the school that I was, there were only boys, there were no girls – so they used to push gangsterism. Always ruling others, smoking drugs and all those things at school”.*

Based on the findings presented thus far, it could be argued that a significant number of youth in the sample experienced weak levels of attachment to school as the majority of participants in the sample indicated weak or inadequate levels of motivation to attend school (50%), negative relationships with educators (55%) and negative perceptions regarding school (60%). These factors were also reported as influential in their decision to transgress. These findings are supported by the Integrated Social Process perspective of Elliott, et. al. (1979: 10) and by the Social Control perspective of Hirschi (1969: 16) which purport that weak levels of attachment to conventional institutions such as the school may have a similar influence on the behaviour of youth as residing in a socially disorganised area (see section 6.1.2.2.) or experiencing various sources of strain in the family unit such as socio-economic disadvantage or inadequate parental supervision (see section 6.1.1.), as this may lead to youth engaging in various forms of high-risk behaviour, experimentation with illicit substances or attempting to adapt to the strain they experience in their environment by joining a deviant peer group.

As the factors associated with weak levels of attachment to school, namely negative perceptions regarding school (60%), negative relationships with educators (55%) and being poorly motivated to attend school (50%) were reported by 50% or more of the sample population; the findings obtained in the current study also support the research sub-expectation pertaining to the participants' level of attachment to school as a motivating factor for their law-violating behaviour.

Figure 23 presents a summary of the risk factors within the school domain as reported by the participants in the sample.

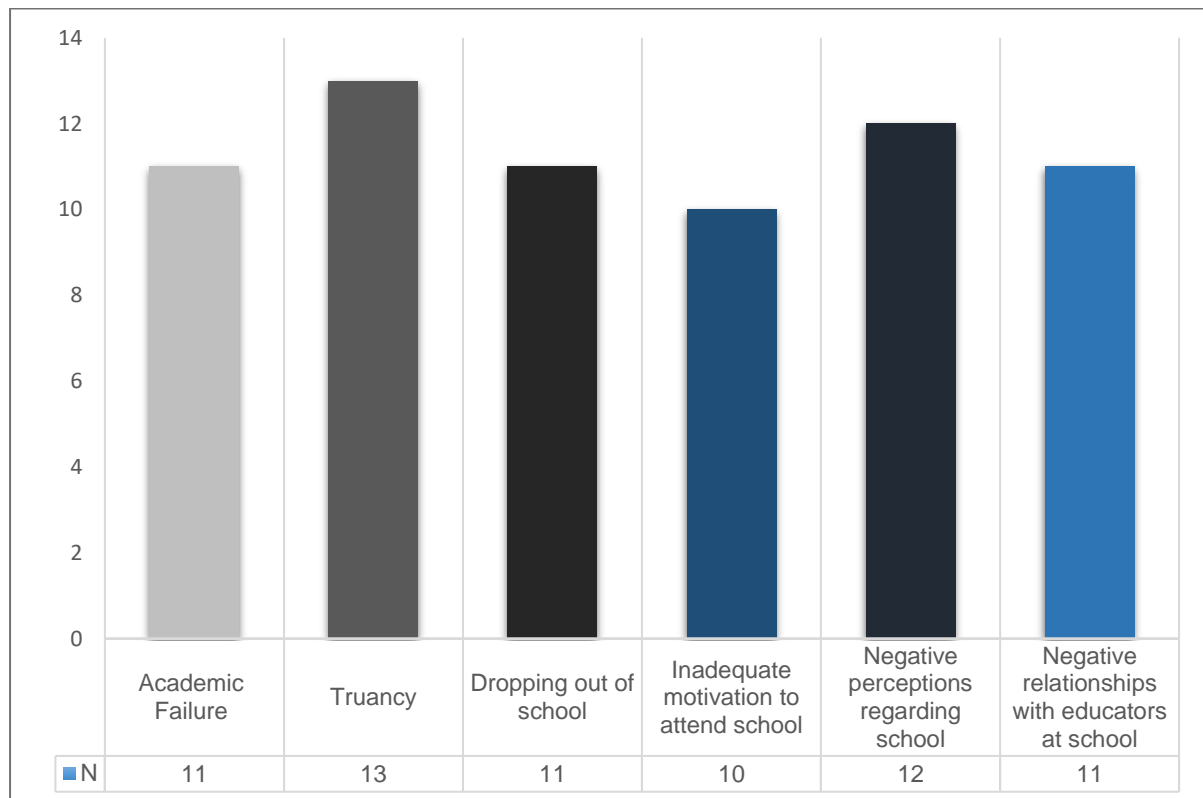


Figure 23: Risk factors within the school domain

The factors reported as conducive to youth misconduct and to the unlawful behaviour of participants in the sample followed a similar pattern with the majority of youth highlighting truancy (65%), negative perceptions regarding school (60%), academic failure (55%), dropping out of school (55%), negative relationships with educators (55%) and inadequate motivation to attend school (50%), as key factors which contributed to their unlawful behaviour. These findings also support all the research sub-expectations pertaining to risk factors within the school domain (see section 6.1.3.) and therefore support the research expectation as a whole, due to 50% or more

of the sample identifying academic failure, truancy, dropping out of school and weak levels of attachment to school as key factors for youth misconduct and as factors which in part, motivated them to contravene the law.

Apart from the aforementioned risk factors, participants in the sample also identified a number of other factors within the school domain as crime inducing. These factors are presented in the discussion of the findings for which research expectations have not been formulated (see section 6.2.3.). The succeeding section therefore provides an exposition of the research findings pertaining to socio-criminogenic risk factors within the peer group context.

6.1.4. Research expectation 4: Socio-criminogenic risk factors within the peer group domain

This research expectation was formulated on the basis that the majority of research participants exposed to socio-criminogenic risk factors within the peer group domain will report that deviant peer affiliation and gang membership contributed to the commission of their law-violating behaviour.

6.1.4.1. Sub-expectation 1: Deviant peer group association and gang membership

Several local and international research studies have highlighted deviant peer association and gang membership as a fundamental risk factor motivating youth misconduct (Barnert, et. al., 2015; Dishion, et. al., 2004; Harder, et. al., 2015; Harris, 2009; Khan & Singh, 2014; McCord, et. al.; 2001; Peacock, 2006). The relationship between youth misconduct and antisocial peer association is also supported in both existing literature (Keijsers, et. al., 2012: 651; Siegel, 2002: 185), as well in the theoretical perspectives of Cloward and Ohlin (1960), Bandura (1977) and Elliott, et. al. (1979). In this regard, antisocial peer association and gang membership is related to increased rates of co-offending, greater involvement in law-violating behaviour and greater involvement in more serious transgressions such as rape and homicide (Bender, 2010: 469; Burfeind & Bartusch, 2006: 425; Wasserman, et. al., 2003: 6). With reference to the current study, deviant peer affiliation, gang membership and participation in gang-related activities have also been cited as a key factor associated with poor academic achievement, illicit substance use, detachment from school and increased rates of truancy (see sections 6.1.3.1. and 6.1.3.2.).

Table 17 represents the proportion of youth in the sample who reported being associated with antisocial peers and with peers who were involved with gang-related activities.

Table 17
Participants who reported affiliation to deviant peers and peers involved in gang-related activities

	Number (N)	Percentage %
Associated with deviant peers or gangs	15	75
No association with deviant peers or gangs	5	25

The majority of participants (75%) reported associating with deviant peers and peers involved in gang-related activities, in comparison to five youth (25%) who reported no affiliation to antisocial peers. A significant percentage of participants (85%) also reported spending most of their time with peers, and feeling closer to their peers than to members of their family (65%). Several participants explained their relationship with their peers by stating:

P2: *“When I am with my friends it’s not the same as being with my family. My friends give me everything I need. I feel like smoking, I smoke. If I feel like drinking, I drink. My family don’t like my friends because they are bad people and its people who also commit crime, but I don’t think they are bad people”.*

P3: *“The thing that make me spend time with my friends is because my family was always at work, so I didn’t spend much time with them. My family dislikes my friends because they know that my friends were violent people in the community. I felt closer to my friends because they were always there for me when I wanted to fight, they were always protecting me, and everything I tell them, they did it”.*

P9: *“When I am at home, I don’t like to talk to that people [family]. I don’t why – but when I am with my friends I can talk anything that I want to talk. I feel free to talk with them. My family didn’t like my friends because of the things they did, the crime they committed”.*

P10: *“My family was preaching every day ‘don’t make friends with that boys, that boys they come from prison’ and so on. Then I will tell them ‘you can’t choose for me a life’.*

I end up thinking stupid – that if my family don't give me attention – maybe if I go with those friends I will get more attention”.

With reference to the findings presented, it is apparent that a number of factors contributed to youth in the sample spending most of their time with peers, despite the majority (75%) indicating that their family did not approve of the peers they chose to associate with. These factors included gaining access to alcohol and illicit substances as is evident in the response of Participant 2, experiencing lower levels of attachment to the family and stronger attachment to the peer group as illustrated in the response of Participant 9 and Participant 10, a lack of parental supervision, and rebelling against the authority of the family as supported by the response of Participant 3 and Participant 10 respectively. This is supported by Harris (2009: 55), Bartol and Bartol (2017: 55) and Higgins, et. al. (2011: 1278), who argue that parental influence is generally disregarded during the adolescent phase of life-span development, and substituted by peer influence as youth often feel closer to peers than to family, prefer spending time with peers and seek out peers who display behaviour patterns similar to their own. Harris (2009: 55) furthers this by noting that a general congruency often also exists amongst peers, with specific reference to maladaptive behaviours such as aggression, the abuse of illicit substances and sexual promiscuity.

The need for protection from rival gangs within the community was also highlighted as a key reason for associating with deviant peers or peers who were part of a gang. This is exhibited in the response of two participants (10%) who revealed that they experienced a sense of protection and respect in the peer group, an aspect which may arguably not have been experienced in the family, school or community. The participants motivated their views by stating:

P8: *“When I was with the gang I feel protected, I feel I'm in a world where many things can go my way if I am with them. I felt the community must look at me and say ‘that guy is rough’ to give me respect”.*

P15: *“My family didn't like my friends because they were older than me, and my family knew that they were trouble makers because always in the street you will hear about them – what it is that they have done. They have robbed people again, or they have stolen something. When I started walking around with them I also got involved in*

robbing people and I started enjoying these things that I am doing because no harm was happening to me because they are always there to protect me”.

Participants also disclosed how leisure time was spent whilst in the company of their peers. These findings are presented in Figure 24.

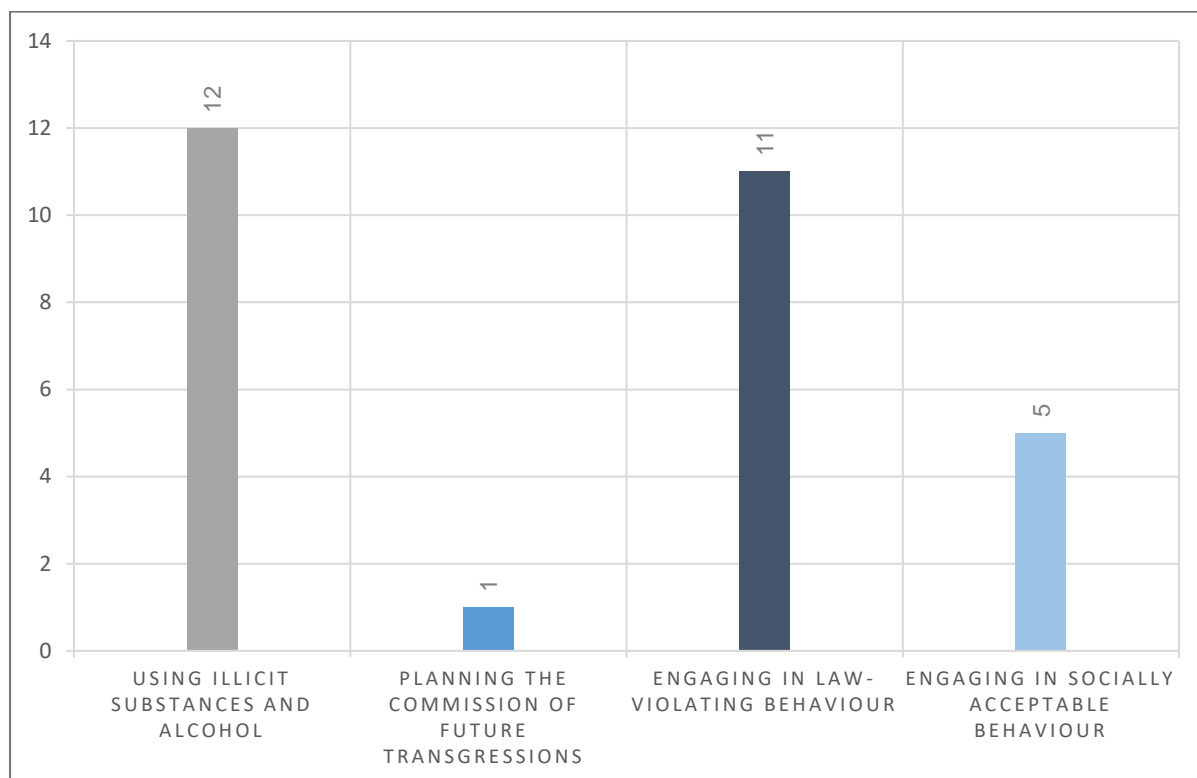


Figure 24: *Activities engaged in during leisure time with peers*

The majority of participants in the sample (60%) reportedly engaged in the consumption of alcohol and illicit substances during leisure time spent with peers, while 11 participants (55%) reportedly engaged in law-violating behaviour during this time. With reference to illicit substance use and violating the law, 11 participants (55%) indicated that any free time with peers was spent using illicit substances, in addition to the commission of unlawful behaviour. The succeeding section provides an account of the narratives provided by the participants in this regard.

P2: *“We smoke and drink – and we commit crime together”.*

P9: *“We smoke drugs and commit crime”.*

P14: *“Smoking dagga [cannabis], drugs and drinking alcohol. We also commit crime to get hold of these substances”.*

P15: *“When I’m with them we spend time doing the wrong things. If not robbing people, then we go town to steal. After that we go back to the location and we go smoke drugs and drink. I never did anything positive with them”.*

P19: *“We spent time doing the wrong things like crime, drinking, doing drugs – all those things”.*

P20: *“By smoking drugs, by asking money for drugs, by stealing for drugs”.*

The findings above concur with the research findings of Harder, et. al. (2015), which highlighted deviant peer association and substance abuse as the two most prominent predictors for youth misconduct (also see section 3.3.4.2.). The findings also correspond with local research findings by Khan and Singh (2014) who conducted a qualitative study with 77 participants and found that 61% of youth in their sample had come into conflict with the law whilst in the company of peers. Furthermore, the findings are supported by Bender (2010: 469) who maintains that youth misconduct is to a large extent motivated by a need for peer approval, and that youth misconduct is generally behaviour acquired through a process of social learning via contact with social networks such as the peer group.

In comparison to engaging in illicit substance use or unlawful behaviour, five participants from the sample (25%) reported engaging in prosocial activities with their peers such as playing sports or doing school work. As indicated in Table 17, these participants have also indicated that they do not associate with deviant peers or with peers who are involved in gang-related activities.

The following section presents an exposition of the proportion of participants who acknowledge being part of a gang, as well as participant views regarding their own gang involvement as a key factor which contributed to the commission of their current transgression. Figure 25 and Figure 26 respectively, present the proportion of participants who reported being part of a gang and the proportion of participants who identified gang membership as a crucial factor which motivated their current transgression.

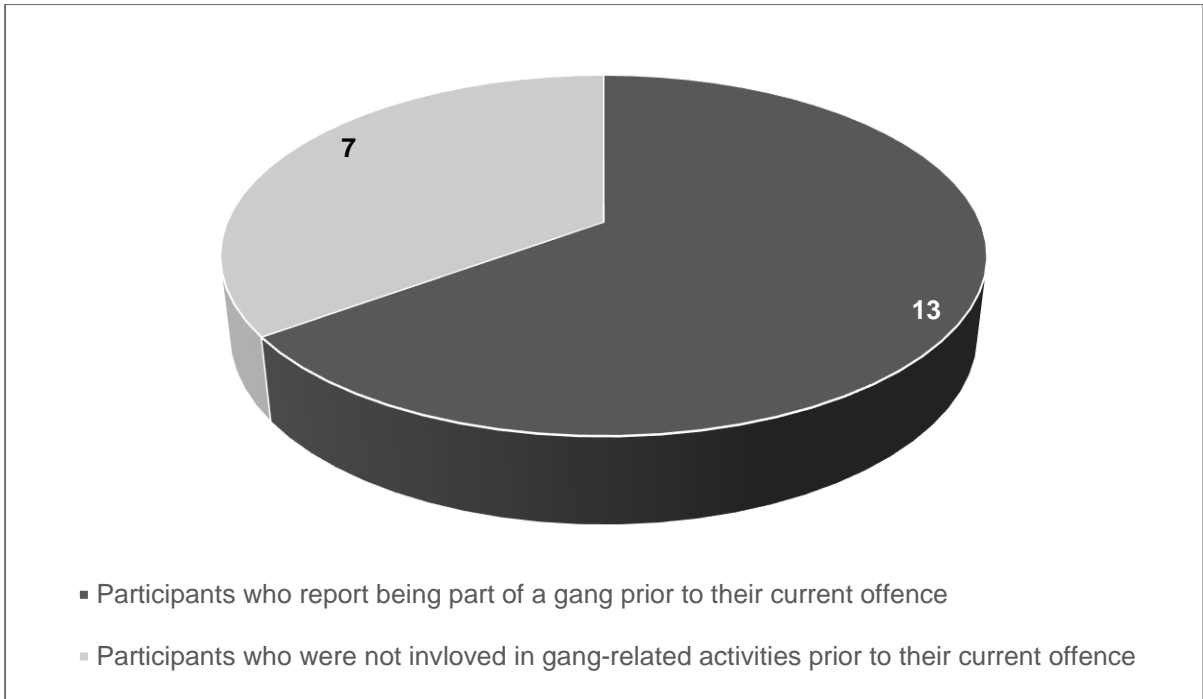


Figure 25: *Participants who were in a gang prior to their current transgression*

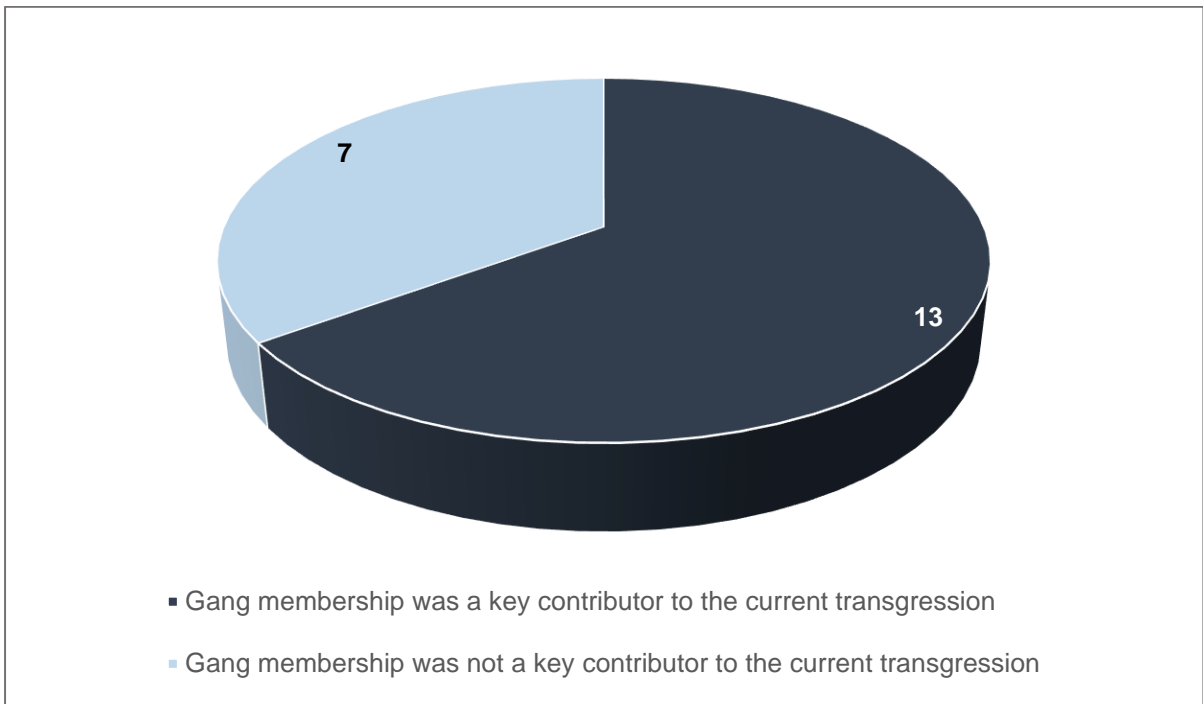


Figure 26: *Participants who identified gang membership as a key risk factor*

Based on the findings presented in Figure 25 and Figure 26 respectively, 13 participants (65%) in the sample indicated that they were part of a gang and 13 participants (65%) highlighted their involvement in a gang as a pertinent factor which motivated them to come into conflict with the law. The findings illustrated in Figure 25

and Figure 26 are also supported by Bartollas and Schmalleger (2013: 140) and Siegel (2002: 197), who assert that gang members perpetrate more transgressions in comparison to any other youth in the social environment, particularly when gang members engage in the excessive use of substances. Furthermore, the findings obtained in the current study correspond with the research of Hawkins, et. al. (2000: 2) which indicate that gang membership by age 14 triples the risk of engaging in violent transgressions by age 18, whilst gang membership at age 16 more than quadruples this risk. Participants who identified their involvement in a gang as a key risk factor which influenced their behaviour, motivated their view by stating:

P1: *“Yes, because there was this girl, she was also part of our gang. Then two months to three months, she didn’t want to talk to me, so I felt like maybe these people they are starting to ignore me. So I went and do the crime so that they can be pleased and say that ‘okay this guy is following the instruction’”.*

P3: *“Yes. The person I deceased, he didn’t have an issue with me. He had an issue with my friend in the gang. He wanted to stab him and I can’t just stand and watch him stabbing my friend. I also had to act”.*

P5: *“Yes, because they are always saying let’s make things that are not good”.*

P6: *“Yes, because when I am with my friends we are making bad things and we only advise each other with bad things”.*

P8: *“They encouraged me to stab people, I couldn’t make my own decisions because I felt pressure on me. If I ignore them, I won’t belong in the gang because they will thing I’m scared. So I showed them what I can do, and I hurt people’s children very badly to show them, and to get their respect”.*

P10: *“Yes because they were always telling me ‘it’s now time for you to show that you are part of us’. They will tell me I must go outside and take someone [robbery] so that they know they can trust me”.*

P14: *“I did crime to get a rank in the gang, and so that they can respect me”.*

P19: *“Yes, we were all together and we did it together. We didn’t try to stop each other or to show each other the right ways”.*

P20: *“Yes, nobody can say you are wrong because we saw the wrong things as good”.*

With reference to the findings presented in this section, several aspects became apparent. Both affiliation to antisocial peers (75%) and the involvement in gang-related activities (65%) seemed to be fundamental risk factors which influenced the behaviour of a significant number of participants in the sample as illustrated in Figure 24 and Figure 26. The majority of youth in the sample had relationships with peers who engaged in law-violating behaviour, and may have come into conflict with the law as a result of peer pressure or due to maladaptive behaviour being learnt and reinforced within the peer group. A significant number of youth in the sample also reported spending the majority of their time with peers (85%) and indicated that they felt closer to their peers than to members of their family (65%). The abuse of illicit substances, which is regarded as a risk factor in itself, is seemingly substantially related to deviant peer association and gang membership. Furthermore, gang membership and antisocial peer affiliation seem to be strongly associated with exposure to other socio-criminogenic risks, such as parental absence, socio-economic disadvantage, poor academic achievement and dropping out of school.

As deviant peer association and involvement in gang-related activities were identified by more than 50% of the sample, the findings support the research expectation that the majority of participants in the sample would identify deviant peer affiliation (75%) and their involvement in gang-related activities (65%) as a predictor for youth misconduct as well as a key factor which motivated their own unlawful behaviour.

6.1.5. Research expectation 5: The interrelationship between socio-criminogenic risk factors

This research expectation was formulated on the basis that the majority of research participants exposed to socio-criminogenic risk factors will report exposure to a combination of risk factors from different domains as opposed to a single risk factor from one domain, with the aim of identifying commonly recurring clusters of risk factors applicable to most youth in the sample. This expectation was also formulated on the basis of existing literature (Bartollas & Schmalleger, 2013: 5; Bezuidenhout, 2013: 70; Shader, 2001: 4) and prior studies (Harris, 2009; Khan & Singh, 2014) conducted on the social risk factors for youth misconduct. According to Bartollas and Schmalleger (2013: 5) socio-criminogenic risk factors seldom occur in isolation, and maladaptive behaviours including the use of illicit substances, poor academic achievement, socio-

economic disadvantage and sexual promiscuity are generally interrelated. Youth involvement in one form of maladaptive behaviour such as antisocial peer affiliation, is thus often indicative of some degree of involvement in other high-risk activities such as illicit substance abuse or truancy. Bezuidenhout (2013: 70) and Shader (2001: 4) substantiate this notion by affirming that social risk factors are co-dependent and that exposure to risk factors in one domain (i.e. the family) would generally influence behaviour in another domain (i.e. the peer group). Moreover, Hawkins, et. al. (2000:7) note that exposure to a single risk factor in any domain seldom has the potential to produce law-violating behaviour. However, the influence of criminogenic risk factors are exponentially increased when a greater number of factors are present.

Based on this notion and on the research findings presented thus far, Figure 27 presents an exposition of the socio-criminogenic risk factors to which participants in the sample were reportedly exposed.

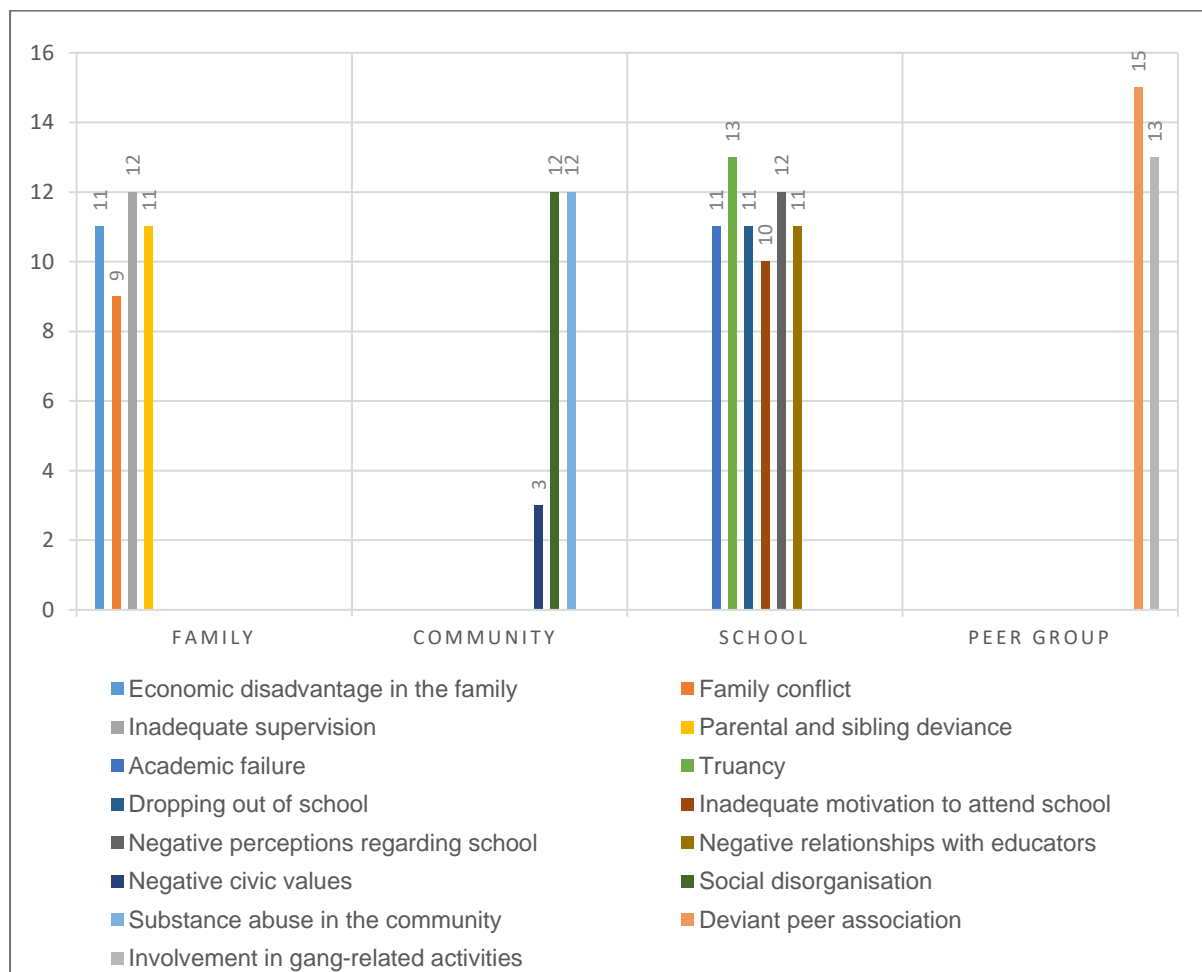


Figure 27: Socio-criminogenic risk factors reported by participants

The findings in Figure 27 correspond with the existing literature (Bartollas & Schmallegger, 2013: 5; Bezuidenhout, 2013: 70; Shader, 2001: 4) and with prior research (Harris, 2009; Khan & Singh, 2014) conducted with reference to the criminogenic risk factors for youth misconduct, as research participants reported exposure to several risk factors from each of the different domains. The majority of participants (75%) reported deviant peer association, which included affiliating with peers who were involved in gang-related activities. A significant number of participants (65%) identified their own involvement in gang-related activities as a factor which contributed to them contravening the law. In the community domain, social disorganisation (60%) and the availability and frequent use of illicit substances (60%) were identified as prominent risk factors. With reference to the school context, the majority of participants reported truancy (65%) and negative perceptions regarding school (60%) as prominent risk factors. Eleven participants (55%) reported academic failure and dropping out of school as prominent risk factors. Participants in the sample also reported exposure to numerous risk factors in the family domain. Inadequate parental supervision was reported by 12 participants in the sample (60%), followed by parental and sibling deviance (55%), socio-economic disadvantage (55%) and family conflict and interpersonal violence (45%).

Based on the findings presented in this section, it is apparent that youth in the sample were reportedly exposed to several socio-criminogenic risk factors within the domain of the family, school, community and peer group. The research participants also identified the risk factors presented in Figure 27 as pertinent factors motivating youth misconduct in general, and as key factors which contributed to the commission of their own law-violating behaviour. However, it became apparent that the exposure to certain risk factors (i.e. affiliation to deviant peers) were more prominent than others (i.e. family conflict). With reference to the unique experiences of participants in the sample, it also became clear that certain risk factors were more influential in terms of coming into conflict with the law as opposed to other risk factors reported by the participants. Subsequently, participants were requested to identify the factors which they felt had the greatest influence on their behaviour or played the biggest role in the commission of their unlawful behaviour. This would also determine the presence of commonly recurring clusters of risk factors reported by the majority of participants in the sample. These findings are presented in Figure 28.

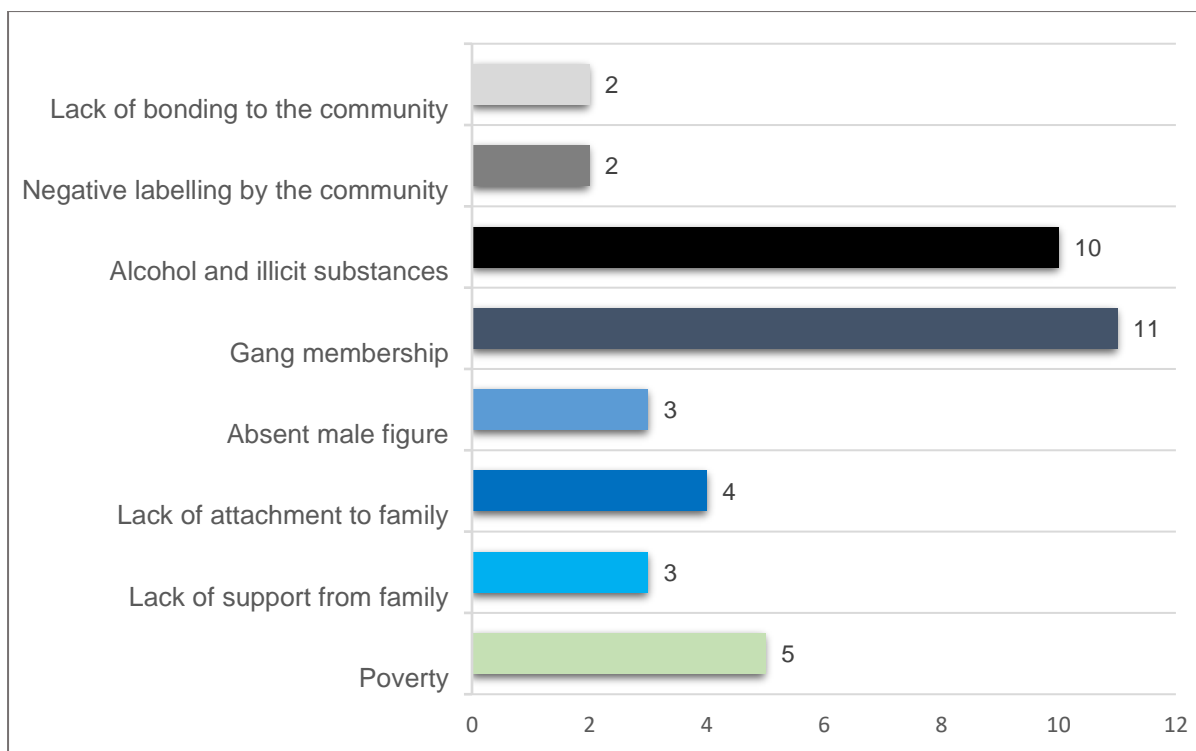


Figure 28: *Risk factors identified as having the greatest influence on the unlawful behaviour of participants in the sample*

With regard to the socio-criminogenic risk factors identified as having the greatest influence on the behaviour of participants, gang membership (55%) was reported as the most commonly recurring factor. This was followed by the frequent use of alcohol or illicit substances (50%) and socio-economic disadvantage (25%), with 10% of participants highlighting a lack of bonding with the community, negative labelling by the community (10%) and the absence of a male role model (15%) as pertinent factors which contributed to their unlawful behaviour. Based on these findings, it is apparent that the most commonly recurring cluster of risk factors reported by participants in the sample was comprised of gang membership (55%) and the use of alcohol or illicit substances (50%). The findings in the current study thus concur with the research of Harder, et. al. (2015) in which gang affiliation and illicit substance use were also highlighted as the two most pertinent predictors for youth misconduct. Furthermore, the findings support the research expectation pertaining to the interrelated nature between socio-criminogenic risk factors as more than 50% of the sample identified several risk factors as crime inducing (see Figure 27) and highlighted gang membership (55%) and alcohol/illicit substance use (50%) as the most commonly recurring cluster of risk factors motivating their unlawful behaviour (see figure 27).

6.2. Discussion of serendipitous findings

Due to the exploratory nature of this research study, the interview schedule revealed data for which research expectations had not been formulated. The findings discussed in this section highlight a number of other factors identified by participants as crime-inducing, though to a less significant extent in comparison to the risk factors discussed in the foregoing section (see section 6.1.). Furthermore, this section provides an exposition of the findings related to the participants' perceptions and views regarding protective factors which have the potential to act as a buffer against the influence of exposure to socio-criminogenic risk factors, and which may reduce the propensity for youth to come into conflict with the law. The collected data is presented in frequency distribution tables, figures and narrative accounts of the participants' experiences. The succeeding section provides an exposition of serendipitous findings pertaining to socio-criminogenic risk factors within the family unit.

6.2.1. Serendipitous research findings pertaining to the family unit

With reference to the research findings presented in the foregoing section, the frequent use of alcohol and illicit substances were identified as a key risk factor within the community (see Table 10 and Table 13) and school domains (see Table 16). A large proportion of participants in the sample (60%) also identified the use of alcohol and illicit substances as the most common activity engaged in whilst in the company of their peers (also see Figure 24) and as one of the most influential factors motivating them to contravene the law (50%) second to their involvement in gang-related activities (see Figure 28). Apart from being exposed to illicit substances in the community or peer group, Bezuidenhout (2013: 53) and Bartol and Bartol (2017: 490) assert that the abuse of illicit substances or alcohol within the family unit may also be linked to higher rates of criminal victimisation, as well as to increased rates of youth misconduct. In this regard, Figure 29 presents the findings pertaining to the abuse of alcohol or illicit substances within the family unit, while Table 18 provides an exposition of the type of illicit substance/s used by members of the participants' family or extended family.



Figure 29: *The abuse of alcohol and illicit substances within the family unit*

The majority of participants in the sample (70%) reported no abuse of alcohol or illicit substances by members of their family or extended family, while six participants (30%) affirmed that one or more members of their family had abused alcohol or illicit substances prior to the participant coming into conflict with the law. Based on the responses provided by the participants who affirmed the abuse of substances within the family, Table 18 provides an outline of the different type of substances which were reportedly abused by members of their family or extended family.

Table 18
The type of substances abused within the family unit⁷

Substance	Number (N)	Percentage %
Alcohol	4	20
Methamphetamine	1	5
Mandrax	1	5
Cannabis	1	5

⁷ It is possible that a respective participant may have reported the abuse of multiple substances by members of their family or extended family. Thus, the total number of participants (N) and the percentage (%) does not equate to 20 and 100 respectively.

The majority of participants (20%) who reported substance abuse within their household, reported the abuse of alcohol by members of their family or extended family. The abuse of methamphetamine, mandrax and cannabis respectively, was reported by one participant (5%) from the sample population. None of the participants who reported alcohol or illicit substance abuse by members of their household felt that it contributed to the commission of their own law-violating behaviour. However, it should be noted that although 10 participants (50%) identified the use of illicit substances as one of the most significant contributors to their unlawful behaviour (see Figure 28), this referred to the participants own use of substances, which based on their perceptions was as a result of their affiliation to deviant peers or their involvement in gangs or due to these substances being freely available and used in their community, as opposed to being used by members of their household.

These findings therefore do not correspond with prior research and existing literature (Hawkins, et. al., 2000: 3; McCord, et. al., 2001: 75; Shader, 2001: 6), as alcohol and illicit substance abuse within the family unit was not identified as a pertinent risk factor which influenced the behaviour of the participants in the sample. However, these findings only pertain to the sample population and are not necessarily applicable to the universe of youth in conflict with the law. Alcohol and illicit substance abuse within the family unit may therefore not be disregarded as a pertinent socio-criminogenic risk factor within the family domain as it may have been influential in a significant number of other cases where youth transgressed, and as a result should be subjected to further research involving a larger participant sample, female participants and participants below the age of 18 years.

In addition to the findings pertaining to alcohol and illicit substance abuse by members of the family or extended family, the research participants were also requested to identify other challenges or factors within their family unit which they perceived as crime inducing and which contributed to their unlawful behaviour. The factors identified in this regard are presented in Table 19.

Table 19
Additional risk factors identified within the family unit⁸

Risk Factor	Number (N)	Percentage %
Lack of care amongst family members	2	10
Lack of communication in the family	1	5
The loss of a parent/s	2	10
The absence of a male role model	1	5
Family encourages unlawful behaviour	1	5
Anger or resentment toward family	1	5
No other challenges identified	9	45

The majority of participants in the sample (45%) reported no other challenges within the context of their family which significantly influenced their behaviour or which motivated them to transgress, apart from the risk factors identified in Figure 13 and Figure 14 respectively (see section 6.1.1.). The absence of a male role model in the household was identified as a unique challenge by one participant (5%) who perceived this absence of a father figure as a key risk factor for youth misconduct and as a factor which contributed to his own behaviour. The participant recounted his experience as follows:

P1: *“I never had a father figure. My uncle was always out, so there was no one to guide when I do something right, or good or bad. I was alone. At last I didn’t know how to respect the women. I was being abusive too much toward women. It began at home. I first abused my sister, the one that comes after me – then I did the same with other women”.*

The excerpt above supports the findings of Bezuidenhout and Joubert (2003: 59) and Bezuidenhout (2013: 76), which refer to data obtained from 25 youth convicted for serious violations, whom all reported being reared in the absence of their father or

⁸ In Table 19 a respective participant may have identified multiple challenges within the family unit as being conducive to their own law-violating behaviour. Thus, the total number of participants (N) and the percentage (%) does not equate to 20 and 100% respectively.

another member of the extended family fulfilling the male role. This may place young males at risk of contravening the law, as it may have a negative effect on the socialisation process, as well as potentially increase their risk of joining a youth gang which could function both as a surrogate family and provide a platform where youth could learn features associated with the male role (see section 3.3.1.4.).

The loss of one or both parents may have a similar effect as being reared in the absence of a male figure, and was identified by two participants (10%) as a significant factor motivating their own law-violating behaviour. The participants explained the impact of losing a parent by stating:

P14: *“It affect me a lot, it’s a long-term effect. I couldn’t understand why that thing happened to me, and I started becoming aggressive. That thing built anger in me. I started stabbing people, robbing people – before I joined a gang”.*

P17: *“The way they [family] acted towards me after my mother passed away. They showed not caring to me”.*

The findings above concur with the findings of Bezuidenhout (2013: 76), and with international research conducted on 1 600 youth convicted for sexual transgressions in which 57% of the sample highlighted the loss of a parental figure as a contributor to their unlawful conduct (Harris, 2009: 41). In this regard, the death of a parent or caregiver may lead to feelings of aggression (as reflected in the response of Participant 14 above), may place financial strain on the family, may affect the socialisation process of youth, or may break down the level of attachment within the family (as is evident from the response of Participant 17 above). One participant (5%) was reportedly encouraged to engage in unlawful behaviour by members of his family. Arguably, this ‘positive attitude’ toward criminality may have formed part of the participant’s socialisation process, as law-violating behaviour was seemingly approved of within the family unit. The participant reported the following:

P13: *“Now and then things were bad at home, we struggled a bit. My mother took my father to court for maintenance. My family had an influence on me because they told me the things I was doing was right, but I must be careful of my friends because they will turn against me and be state witnesses. So I must commit crime alone”.*

With reference to the response of Participant 13, it is apparent that financial challenges placed a great deal of pressure on the family and may have motivated the participant to contravene the law in order to support his family or to assist in alleviating the financial strain they experienced. However, it should be noted that parental or sibling deviance may also have been present as the participant recounts his family encouraging him to continue with the commission of unlawful activities, as well as advising him to implement steps necessary to evade arrest and conviction (i.e. being cautious of his peers and transgressing on his own). Subsequently, it could be argued that the socialisation process of this participant may have been negatively affected, as unlawful behaviour was supported within the family unit or seen as 'acceptable' or 'normal' behaviour due to their economic position. It may also be possible that other members of his family engaged in criminality as well, and that he may have emulated the behaviour displayed by these members whom he viewed as role models (Bandura, 1971: 5). Further challenges highlighted by the sample included a lack of care amongst family members (10%), a lack of communication in the family (5%) and harbouring anger or resentment toward members of the family (5%).

The succeeding section presents an exposition of additional research findings pertaining to the presence and influence of socio-criminogenic risk factors within the community domain.

6.2.2. Serendipitous research findings pertaining to the community domain

Apart from the availability and use of illicit substances in the community, social disorganisation and positively orientated civic values regarding unlawful behaviour (see section 6.1.2.), several other risk factors within the community domain have the potential to increase the risk for youth misconduct exponentially. These factors include poverty and unemployment, gang membership and negative labelling by community members (Barnert, et. al., 2015: 1368; Bartol & Bartol, 2017: 490; Benekos & Merlo, 2009: 85; Hoffman, 2006: 869; Kawachi, et. al., 1999: 724; Kaylen & Pridemore, 2013: 907; Madu & Matla, 2003: 122).

As the aforementioned factors may also have been influential with reference to the law-violating behaviour of participants in the sample, participants were requested to identify additional challenges or factors within their community which they feel have

had an influence on their behaviour and which motivated them to contravene the law. The factors identified by the participants in this regard, are presented in Figure 30.

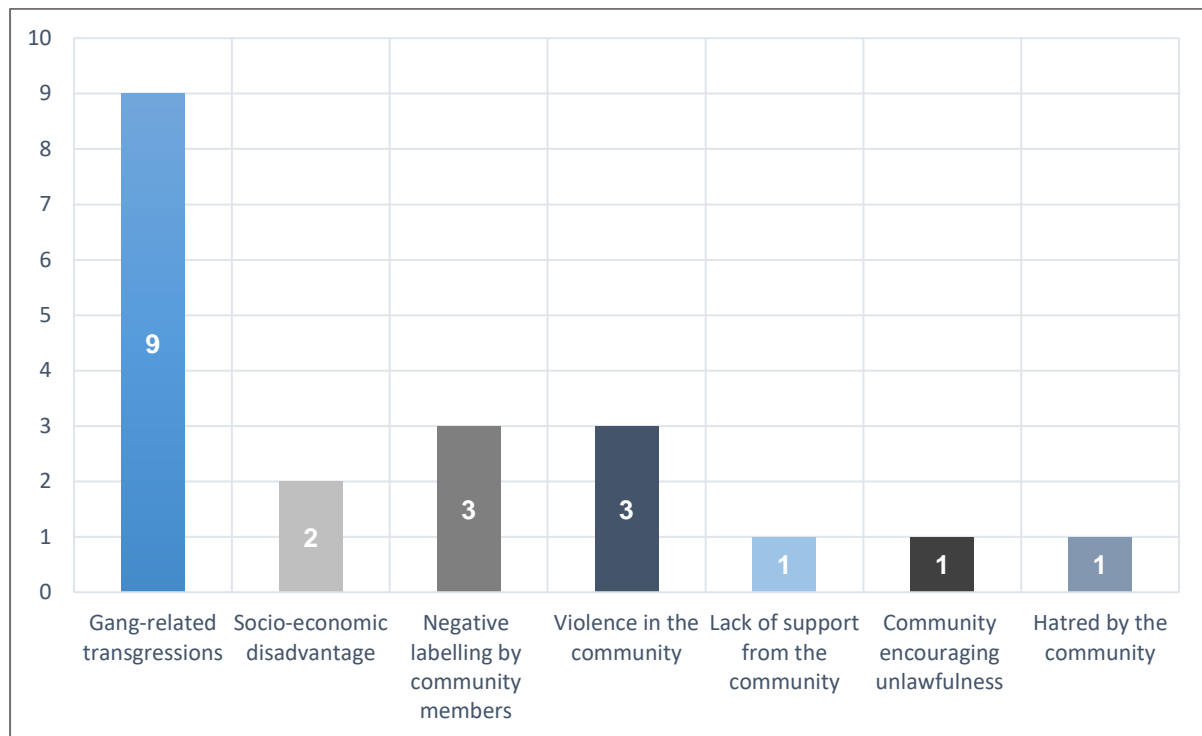


Figure 30: *Additional risk factors identified within the community domain*

Nine participants in the sample (45%) identified the presence of gangs and gang-related transgressions in their community as a factor which contributed to their own unlawful behaviour. Two participants explained the association between misconduct and the presence of gangs within their community by stating:

P8: *“The gangs wanted to hurt my cousins and rob them, so I felt that they will look to me to help them. If I don’t, how will they see me in years to come. So I felt I must stand up and do something so that my younger cousins can see that I am here to protect them. So I decided I am also going to join a gang, then I am also going to hurt people to also show those guys what type of person I am. I started to change until I found that I am now a very violent person”.*

P9: *“When you grow up, you also want to be like that guy that always commits crimes. He is respected, so you also want to be respected. They become your role models”.*

In addition to gang-related transgressions within the community, the climate of violence was highlighted by three participants in the sample (15%), while negative labelling by members of the community was identified by two participants (10%).

According to Tannenbaum (1938: 19) and Williams and McShane (2014: 115), when a negative label is applied, it may alter the self-image of youth and cause people to react to the label rather than to the individual. Brown (2005: 38) and Peacock (2008: 63) support this notion and add that negative labelling not only limits the number of legitimate opportunities available to youth, but also increases their risk for transgressing as these labels may be internalised by youth and lead to the individual changing their behaviour to fit the label. The latter is supported by one participant in the sample (5%) who explains:

P7: "It's those false accusations. My community is always accusing people and calling you a criminal, even when you did nothing. It was youngsters from another community that come and commit crime in our community, at night. Then always my community will say it's me that do that crime. So I wanted to show them if I want to do something, I will do it in front of their eyes. So next time if they thought I was doing something, I have showed them I do it in front of them, not behind their backs. I will show them if I do something".

Similar to the experience of participant 7 above, another participant in the sample (5%) ascribed his behaviour to the treatment he received from community members by stating:

P15: "That community of mine, it's not a nice community. Some people there will encourage you to make more crime, not telling you to make good things. It's also the hatred I got from the community. They never wanted me close to their children so that I can play with them. That's why I ended up going with elder people and I learned wrong things from those people".

Based on the findings presented in Figure 30, it is apparent that a range of additional risk factors within the community domain may have contributed to the unlawful behaviour of participants in the sample. However, it should be noted that the availability and use of alcohol and illicit substances (60%) and social disorganisation (60%) were regarded as the most influential community-level risk factors which motivated youth in the sample to contravene the law based on their unique experiences regarding their exposure to the aforementioned factors (see Figure 19). The succeeding section presents an exposition of additional research findings pertaining to the school context.

6.2.3. Serendipitous research findings pertaining to the school domain

Apart from academic failure, truancy, dropping out of school and weak levels of attachment to school, several other factors related to the school environment were identified by the participants as conducive to youth misconduct. Figure 31 presents an exposition of these factors.

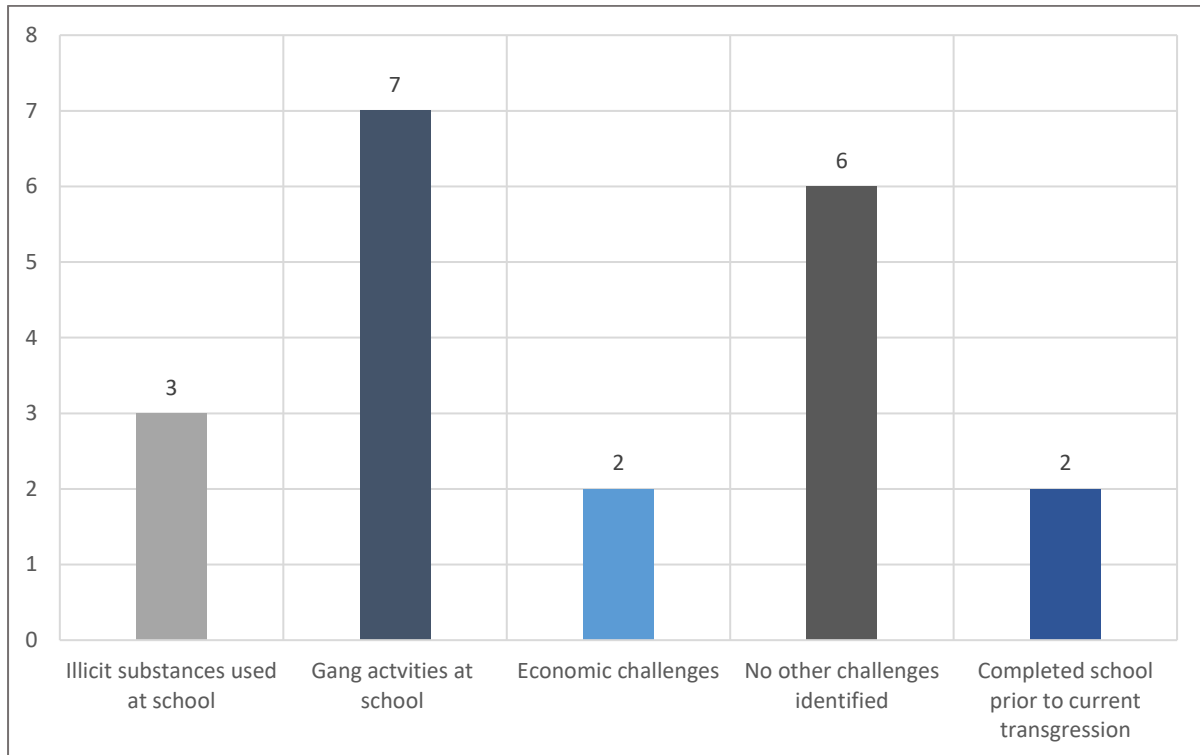


Figure 31: *Additional risk factors identified within the school context*

The majority of youth in the sample (35%) identified gang-related activities on the school premises as a key factor which motivated them to contravene the law. Several participants explained the association between their own antisocial behaviour and gang-related activities at their school by stating:

P3: *“The thing that led to me commit crime is the one of a lot of gangs at school. That affected my behaviour because the school I was attending, there was a lot of Basotho’s and that is where the main thing started, at school. It started at school where we have to separate in classes – Sesotho classes and Afrikaans classes – and then they would tease each other about their language and culture, and it started to become a gang thing. It started at school and then it goes outside to the community”.*

P6: *“Yes, because in school we are fighting for territory again. When I was in the school, I should check class to class where is the other gang (rival gang members). Every day I will keep my knife or my panga [machete] in my school bag”.*

P8: *“I learnt it [violence] there because my friends were in the gangs, and they were respected. They even fought the teachers. Then I saw I must join because I also want respect and worship. That contributed to me doing crime because I felt like the other kids could also worship me, so I can also go into gangsterism. I also wanted that feeling because I saw many guys that were violent at school got many girls. I saw that it’s true, if you are violent the girls feel protected, so I got more women”.*

P9: *“Yes, that influenced my behaviour. I wanted to be like that high guys that commit crime of school, that the children are scared of them. I wanted other people to be scared of me and to respect me”.*

P14: *“It starts at school, gang activities start at school. Things we do at school, you will fool your parents. Your parents will think ‘this boy is committed because he is attending school each and every day’ but behind the scenes you are corrupt. After school you will go and lie to your parents, ‘no I have some extra classes’ but then you go and rob – and your parents will cover you because they know this guy at this time, he was at extra classes or at the library”.*

P15: *“Yes, because everything started at school. This thing of fighting and gangsterism, we also used to fight at school. I joined the gang at the location, but most of my friends [fellow gang members] they were at school”.*

From the responses above, it seems that the school environment may be extremely conducive to gang activity, with particular reference to gang-related acts of violence as supported by the response of Participants 6, 8 and 9. Moreover, it seems evident that in numerous instances gang membership may originate in the school (as indicated in the response of Participants 3, 14 and 15) as opposed to the community, as it is often assumed. In addition to gang activity, the use of illicit substances on the school premises was highlighted by three participants (15%) from the sample, as a factor which negatively influenced their behaviour.

Two participants motivated their view by disclosing that:

P13: *“I started crime when I started smoking drugs. At school too, I went to school with dagga [cannabis] and smoked dagga at school. When I was high, the fighting started”.*

P14: *“Yes, at school – I don’t want to lie – there was a lot of crime because young boys were selling drugs at school, because it’s like a fashion now. If you don’t smoke, you are nothing”.*

The responses above, correspond with the findings presented in Figure 13 regarding the use of illicit substances within the community, and several youth in the sample affirmed the association between youth misconduct and the use of illicit substances (see section 6.1.2.3.). Although illicit substance use is an independent risk factor, it seemed to be associated with the presence and involvement in gangs in both the school and community context. It also became apparent that several other risk factors identified by the sample were to some extent associated with the involvement and participation in gang-related activities, with specific reference to weak levels of attachment to school, truancy, dropping out of school and inadequate parental and community supervision. The significance of gang membership as a pertinent risk factor for youth in the sample, was also obvious during both the interview process and the data analysis phase of the study.

The following section provides a brief account of the participants’ views on potential protective factors which could reduce the probability for youth misconduct by reducing the detrimental influence of exposure to socio-criminogenic risk factors.

6.2.4. Findings related to the identification of potential protective factors

Apart from identifying the various risk factors to which research participants had been exposed, and exploring the potential influence of these factors on the behaviour of the participants, the interview schedule also included a section on factors which have the potential of reducing the probability for youth to come into conflict with the law. The latter, also referred to as protective factors, refer to interactions, beliefs, experiences or relationships which have the potential to mediate or reduce the effect of exposure to socio-criminogenic risk factors. Furthermore, these factors enhance the level of resilience to adversity, particularly when youth are exposed to numerous risk factors within the domains of the family, school, community and peer group. Protective factors

include having supportive relationships with the family and community, associating with peers who engage in prosocial behaviour and residing in a socially organised community with sufficient recreational and employment opportunities (Arthur, et. al., 2002: 576; De Souza da Silveira, et. al., 2012: 348). Figure 32 presents an outline of protective factors identified by youth in the sample as factors which have the potential to prevent or reduce other youth in their position from coming into conflict with the law.

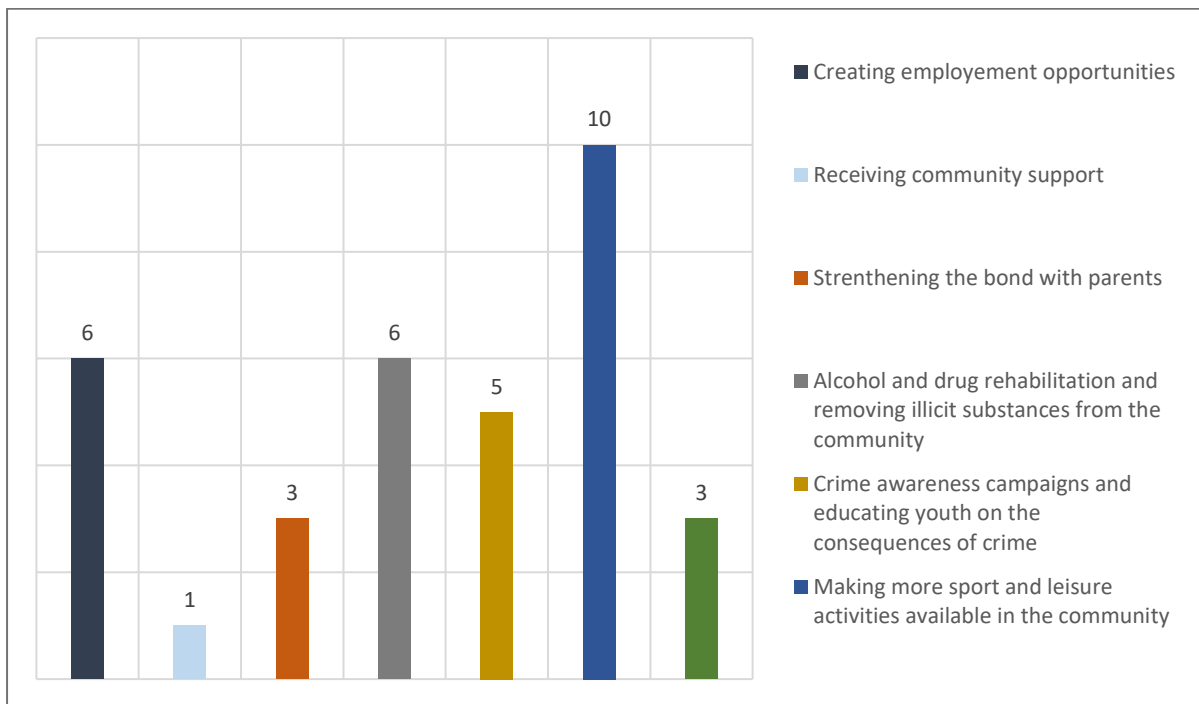


Figure 32: *Potential protective factors identified by participants*

The majority of participants (50%) highlighted the creation of sport and recreational activities in the community as an important factor to consider with reference to the reduction of youth misconduct. According to their experience and views, this would occupy free time and energy, and provide youth with more constructive means with which to achieve social status. In this regard, the participants stated:

P6: *“There should be activities, like in our community there should be sports activities, people should come and teach them with their books and they should advise the youth to stay away from crime”.*

P9: *“The community must do more moral activities. Sports must be more involved in the community to keep them from joining gangs. They must also teach them about the effects of drugs”.*

P18: *“Open soccer teams and projects at schools and clinics – and vegetable gardens for money”.*

P19: *“A book club, sport events. Keeping them busy so that they stay away from the wrong things, like the gangs”.*

From the responses above, participants indicated a clear need for prosocial leisure activities within the community and school domain. These findings correspond with the risk factors reported by participants, as engagement in prosocial activities could provide a platform for youth to achieve social status and would enhance the level of socialisation of youth. Arguably, the creation of prosocial leisure activities and activities aimed at improving the academic performance of youth may also reduce the potential for youth to engage in the use of illicit substances and gang-related activities, as these factors were identified as the most pertinent contributors to the law-violating behaviour of participants in the sample. Lösel and Farrington (2012: 16) support this notion by affirming that socially organised communities have a direct protective effect on the behaviour of youth as ‘non-deprived’ communities to a certain degree, have the potential to mediate the effect of exposure to risk factors for youth misconduct. Communities should thus, ideally make provision for socially acceptable leisure activities which could occupy time and energy and which function as an alternative to coming into conflict with the law.

The creation of employment opportunities (30%) and the establishment of alcohol and drug rehabilitation programmes in the community (30%) were also identified as crucial with regard to the reduction of youth misconduct. Two participants from the sample motivated this by stating:

P2: *“People should sell less drugs and there should be job creation”.*

P11: *“Job opportunities in the community – and these people that don’t have money to eat, they need jobs”.*

These responses indicate the need for conventional avenues to success, and the need to address challenges related to illicit substance abuse in schools and communities. The latter was also highlighted as a key factor which contributed to the behaviour of youth in the sample. Crime awareness campaigns and the need to educate youth about the consequences associated with unlawful behaviour, was identified by five participants from the sample (25%).

These participants explained their view by disclosing the following:

P3: *“To encourage them about crime and the effects of crime by the ex-convict and the ex-offenders, because they know of crime and they experienced crime so it will be easy to tell the young one’s that crime doesn’t pay”.*

P8: *“People who can encourage others and tell them about life in prison and what it’s like in prison. I will encourage them as well, because I will be an ex-convict so they will believe me and listen to me”.*

P14: *“The Department of Correctional Services must play a role by allowing offenders to go there to that children with prison clothes to encourage them about crime and gangsterism, because a person won’t listen to you if they think that you have written a book because they want life experience. Someone like me, because I have experienced it myself and I am able to testify and share it with them”.*

Apart from the aforementioned protective factors, improving the level of attachment to parents (15%), affiliating with prosocial peers (15%) and receiving more support from the community (5%) were also identified as potential factors which could limit the probability of youth who are exposed to socio-criminogenic risk factors from coming into conflict with the law. Based on the findings regarding possible reduction measures for youth misconduct, it is apparent that youth in the sample had a need for stronger levels of attachment to their families and communities, assistance with regard to illicit substance abuse, the creation of legitimate avenues to success and prosocial mechanisms with which to occupy their free time.

6.3. Conclusion

This chapter presented a discussion of the research findings in relation to the research expectations developed in Chapter 4, with the purpose of fulfilling the aims of the study. Research findings were presented in frequency distribution tables, figures and narrative accounts of the participants’ perceptions and experiences pertaining to their exposure to numerous socio-criminogenic risk factors. Moreover, the research results were discussed in relation to existing literature and prior international and domestic research related to the factors associated with youth misconduct within the family, community, school and peer group domains. Due to the exploratory nature of the research, the utilisation of the semi-structured interview schedule (Appendix 1) also

yielded data for which research expectations had not been formulated. These findings were also presented in this chapter.

The findings and discussions provided, highlighted several key risk factors to which participants had reportedly been exposed. Similar to both existing literature and prior research studies, these factors included aspects within the family (socio-economic disadvantage, inadequate parental supervision, parental and sibling deviance, family conflict and interpersonal violence), the school (academic failure, truancy, dropping out of school and detachment from school), the community (negative civic attitudes and beliefs, social disorganisation and illicit substance abuse) and the peer group domains (deviant peer affiliation and gang membership).

With reference to the aforementioned socio-criminogenic risk factors, it became apparent that exposure to a single risk factor was not necessarily sufficient to produce law violating behaviour as all the participants in the sample reported exposure to several risk factors within the various domains. It was also apparent that exposure to certain risk factors such as deviant peer association, truancy, the abuse of illicit substances and social disorganisation were generally experienced by a larger proportion of participants, in comparison to other risk factors such as negative civic values or family conflict. The data obtained also highlighted key protective factors for conflict reduction, based on the perceptions and unique experiences of the participants in the sample.

Although research expectations pertaining to certain risk factors within the family and community domains were not supported by the findings, it is important to note that these findings are based on the unique experiences of the participants in the sample. These factors should therefore not be disregarded, as it may be perceived as pertinent risk factors for misconduct by countless other youth. Thus, it is envisaged that the current research be seen as a point of departure for further research. In this regard, the need for longitudinal research, research using control groups and research utilising an all-inclusive population-representative sample cannot be underemphasised. The aforementioned aspects are explored further in the succeeding chapter, together with an analyses of the data in relation to the fulfilment of the aims of the study (see section 1.6.).

CHAPTER 7: RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

Considering the exploratory appraisal of the socio-criminogenic risk factors associated with youth misconduct as presented in the foregoing chapter, it is possible to ascertain whether the aims of the study have been realised. The research findings generated and the evaluation thereof present a foundation for future research, particularly in lieu of the paucity of domestic research pertaining to the presence and influence of the diverse range of socio-criminogenic risk factors associated with youth misconduct.

7.1. Conclusions pertaining to the fulfilment of the aims of the study

The subsequent discussion focusses on an evaluation of the realisation of the aims of the study, followed by recommendations for further scientific enquiry in order to expand on the current body of research.

7.1.1. Conclusion pertaining to the exploration of socio-criminogenic risk factors which contribute to the law-violating behaviour of youth

The first aim entailed identifying and exploring the myriad of socio-criminogenic risk factors associated with youth misconduct. Focus was placed on numerous socio-criminogenic variables within the family, community, school and peer group domains based on a review of the existing literature and prior research conducted on the risk factors which motivate youth misconduct (see Chapter 3). The findings presented in the foregoing chapter, provided support to several research expectations (see Chapter 4 and Chapter 6) and corresponded with international and domestic literature. However, the findings related to i) family conflict and interpersonal violence and ii) positively orientated civic values and beliefs regarding unlawfulness, did not provide support for the respective research expectations, nor did it concur with prior research or existing literature. Due to the emphasis on exploring the unique perceptions and experiences of youth in the sample, risk factors which were identified by less than 50% of the participants should by no means be disregarded as pertinent predictors for youth misconduct, as experiences and views amongst the youth populace may differ significantly. The data obtained in the current study therefore highlights the need to conduct further research with reference to the criminogenic factors motivating youth misconduct, specifically research with bigger samples and research aimed at

evaluating the influence of these crime inducing factors based on how the factors are perceived and experienced by the research participant.

Furthermore, research findings were presented in relation to risk factors within the family, community, school and peer group domain. Participants reported exposure to a number of risk factors in each of the aforementioned domains, highlighting unique factors which based on their experience, contributed to their unlawful behaviour. In terms of exposure to risk factors within the family domain, it was found that participants had been exposed to several risk factors including inadequate parental supervision (60%), socio-economic disadvantage (55%), parental or sibling deviance (55%) and family conflict and interpersonal violence (45%). In addition, participants also identified other risk factors in the family unit such as a lack of parental attachment and communication (15%), the loss of a parent/s (10%) and the absence of a male figure in the household (5%). These factors were also identified as factors which contributed to the law-violating behaviour of the participants, and thus correspond with existing literature and with the research of Arthur (2007: 7), Bezuidenhout (2013: 75), Clark (2012: 83), Farrington, et. al. (1996: 47), Harris (2009: 44), Hawkins, et. al. (2000: 3), Khan and Singh (2014: 112), McCord, et. al. (2001: 75), Ntshangase (2015: 38), Shader (2001: 6) and Siegel (2002: 158).

However, with regard to the detrimental influence of exposure to illicit substance abuse within the family, the findings did not support existing literature as the minority of youth in the sample (30%) reported exposure to illicit substance abuse in their family, but did not ascribe this as a factor which contributed to their own use of substances or to the commission of their own unlawful behaviour. In this regard, the participants' own use of illicit substances was ascribed partially to the degree of availability and use of these substances in the community, and in part to the frequent use of these substances on the school premises. Due to the sample size, the influence of illicit substance abuse in the family should not be disregarded, as it may have been an influential risk factor in numerous other cases. These findings can thus also serve as rationale to conduct future research on the influence of substance abuse in the family, based on a larger population-representative sample.

With reference to the exposure to criminogenic risk factors within the community domain, the research findings corresponded with the existing literature and with the research of Hoffman (2006: 869), Barnert, et. al. (2015: 1368), Bartol and Bartol (2017: 490), Benekos and Merlo (2009: 85) and Kaylen and Pridemore (2013: 907), as a significant number of participants identified elements of social disorganisation within their community. These participants described their communities as consisting predominantly of female-headed households where there was an absence of male role models (55%), limited opportunities for conventional success (60%) minimal positive role models from which to learn (55%). The majority of participants (60%) also identified the aforementioned elements characteristic of socially disorganised areas, as having contributed to their law-violating behaviour. In addition to community disorganisation, 75% of the participants characterised their communities as areas where alcohol and illicit substances were freely available, while 95% of the sample reported the frequent use of these substances in their community. Twelve participants (60%) ascribed their law-violating behaviour to their own use of alcohol and illicit substances which arguably, may have been amplified as a result of its availability and frequent usage in the areas where they resided prior to their admission to the centre.

Other prominent risk factors identified within the community context included exposure to gang-related activities (45%), negative labelling by community members (15%) and elevated levels of violence within the community (15%). One variable which was identified in existing literature, namely residing in a community with positively orientated values and beliefs regarding unlawfulness, was not supported in the findings as only 15% of the sample reported this as a key risk factor. However, these findings are only applicable to the sample population and may not necessarily apply to the universe of youth in conflict with the law. Subsequently, further research involving a larger sample population is recommended.

In addition to the socio-criminogenic risk factors identified in the family and community domains, participants identified several factors in the school domain which they regarded as pertinent contributors for youth misconduct. The most notable risk factors identified in this regard included truancy (65%), negative perceptions regarding school (60%), dropping out of school (55%) and poor academic achievement (55%). These findings were supported by previous research (Christle, et. al., 2005: 70; Clark, 2012: 82; Ntshangase, 2015: 42), and corresponded with existing literature in both the South

African (Bezuidenhout, 2013: 138; Louw & Edwards, 2004: 267) and international contexts (Bartol & Bartol, 2017: 59; De Souza da Silveira, et. al., 2012: 353).

From the analysis of the research findings, it also became apparent that participants were particularly vulnerable to the influence of peer pressure, affiliation to antisocial peers and involvement in gang-related activities as unique criminogenic risk factors within the peer group domain. Fifteen participants from the sample (75%) reported affiliation to deviant peers and peers involved in gang-related activities, and identified the peer group as being both a pivotal risk factor for youth misconduct in general and a factor which contributed significantly to their own involvement in unlawful behaviour. A significant number of participants also revealed that leisure time spent with peers generally involved the consumption of alcohol and illicit substances (60%) and engaging in law-violating behaviour (55%). Thirteen participants (65%) identified their own involvement and participation in gang-related activities as a pertinent risk factor which motivated them to contravene the law.

Based on the responses provided by the participants, it also became apparent that antisocial peer affiliation and gang membership were fundamental in promoting youth misconduct, as it seemed to be associated with several other socio-criminogenic risk factors including the abuse of illicit substances, poor academic achievement, truancy and dropping out of school. These findings concur with prior research (Khan & Singh, 2014: 112; McCord, et. al., 2001: 80; Ntshangase, 2015: 45; Peacock, 2006: 49; Phillips & Maritz, 2015: 53; Wasserman, et. al., 2003: 6), and support both the Differential Opportunity perspective of Cloward and Ohlin (1960) as well as the Social Learning perspective of Bandura (1971).

Given the evaluation of the findings associated with the exploration of socio-criminogenic risk factors which contributed to the law-violating behaviour of youth in the sample, it can be concluded that a number of risk factors within the domain of the family, school, community and peer group were identified and highlighted as key risk factors which contributed to the commission of their own unlawful behaviour. The first aim of the study was thus realised.

7.1.2. Conclusion pertaining to the identification of prominent recurrent clusters of socio-criminogenic risk factors

The second aim required the identification of commonly recurring clusters of socio-criminogenic risk factors which were reported by the majority of participants in the sample. This research aim was formulated on the basis that criminogenic risk factors seldom appear in isolation as there is usually an interplay between different risk factors which produce a pathway to youth misconduct (Bartollas & Schmalleger, 2013: 5). Bezuidenhout (2013: 70) and Shader (2001: 4) support this notion and affirm that criminogenic risk factors are co-dependent and that exposure to a risk factor in one domain such as the school, is often related to the exposure to risk factors in other domains such as the peer group or community. In addition to the interrelated nature of socio-criminogenic risk factors, the exposure to a single risk factor in any domain is seldom sufficient to produce law-violating behaviour (Hawkins, et. al., 2000: 7). Subsequently, it could be argued that youth in conflict with the law are generally exposed to several risk factors as opposed to any one risk factor.

This notion was supported in the current research as none of the participants reported exposure to a single risk factor in isolation. Although certain risk factors were reported more frequently than others, the existence of commonly recurring clusters of socio-criminogenic risk factors were apparent. These clusters are presented in Figure 27 which provides data on the collection of risk factors to which participants had reportedly been exposed, and which they identified as key contributors in the commission of their law-violating behaviour. The most common risk factors reported by participants included deviant peer affiliation (75%), gang membership (65%), truancy (65%), social disorganisation (60%), the availability and use of illicit substances in the community (60%), inadequate parental supervision (60%), socio-economic disadvantage (55%), dropping out of school (55%) and parental and sibling deviance (55%). On the basis of these findings, it is apparent that the majority of research participants had been exposed to several risk factors across the different domains prior to coming into conflict with the law. Participants in the sample also identified the aforementioned factors as conducive to youth misconduct in general, and as key factors which contributed to their own law-violating behaviour. Subsequently, the findings support the existing literature (Bartollas & Schmalleger, 2013: 5; Bezuidenhout, 2013: 70; Shader, 2001: 4) and previous research (Harris,

2009; Khan & Singh, 2014) conducted on the criminogenic risk factors for youth misconduct.

Considering the plethora of socio-criminogenic risk factors which had been identified by youth in the sample and the exploration of the risk factors which were experienced most frequently by the majority of participants, it was necessary to evaluate which combination or cluster of factors were perceived by the participants as having had the most significant influence on their behaviour. In this regard, gang-membership and involvement in gang-related activities (55%) and the use of illicit substances (50%) were identified as the most commonly recurring cluster of socio-criminogenic risks to which the participants had been exposed, and which they perceived as the most influential factors motivating them to contravene the law. The identification of this recurrent cluster of risk factors may thus be regarded as crucial in the development and presentation of treatment and intervention programmes with reference to participants in the sample, as poor management of these risk factors may encumber any effort to successfully rehabilitate and reintegrate the youth in question. In essence, this signifies the distinction between treating the symptoms (youth misconduct) and treating the most pertinent “cause” (gang membership and illicit substance use). Given this evaluation of the findings associated with the identification of prominent recurrent clusters of socio-criminogenic risk factors, the second aim of the study was realised.

7.1.3. Conclusion pertaining to achieving a greater understanding of the research participants experience of socio-criminogenic risk factors

The final aim of the study entailed an evaluation of the participants’ unique experiences with regard to their exposure to the specific socio-criminogenic risk factors as illustrated in Figure 27. Evaluating these experiences can be regarded as a crucial dimension of risk factor research as an individual may be exposed to several risk factors in various domains, but may not necessarily experience these factors as crime inducing (Bezuidenhout, 2013: 68). This notion is supported by the research findings as clear inconsistencies were reported in terms of exposure to specific risk factors and the participants’ experience of these factors as being conducive to law-violating behaviour.

With reference to socio-criminogenic risk factors within the family unit, nine participants (45%) in the sample identified family conflict and interpersonal violence

as a risk factor, but only three participants (15%) cited family conflict as a contributing factor for their own unlawful behaviour. Eleven participants in the sample (55%) also reported exposure to socio-economic disadvantage within the family unit. In this regard, each of the 11 participants in the sample perceived financial difficulties within the household as a factor which motivated them to contravene the law. It was also apparent that financial challenges motivated several participants to become involved in gang-related activities in order to facilitate the illicit acquisition of money or material goods (Peacock, 2006: 49; Phillips & Maritz, 2015: 53), while several other participants identified economic disadvantage as a primary motive for engaging in economic transgressions as a means of survival.

The latter provides support for the Anomie perspective of Merton (1938: 677) which proposes that individuals may adapt to strain by using *innovative* (illegitimate) means to acquire status or material success when experiencing restricted access to legitimate avenues for goal attainment (also see section 2.2.2.1.3.). Similarly, the majority of participants in the sample identified inadequate parental supervision (60%) and parental and sibling deviance (55%) as key risk factors for youth misconduct, with each of these participants also citing the aforementioned factors as aspects which contributed to their own law-violating behaviour.

In the community domain, 75% of the sample reported that alcohol and illicit substances were freely available in their community and 95% of the sample reported that these substances were frequently used in the area where they resided prior to their admission to the centre. However, only 60% of the sample ascribed their involvement in law-violating behaviour to the availability and use of illicit substances in their community and to their own subsequent use of these substances. With reference to risk factors in the peer group domain, 13 youth (65%) identified gang membership as a risk factor and all 13 participants perceived their involvement in a gang as a pertinent contributor to their most recent transgression.

A comparison of Figure 27 and Figure 28 also demonstrate that the participants' experience with regard to their exposure to certain risk factors and coming into conflict with the law as a result thereof, may differ greatly. From the findings in Figure 27 it is apparent that the majority of participants were exposed to, and identified specific risk factors as key factors contributing to their most recent transgression. These factors

included antisocial peer affiliation (75%), gang membership (65%), community disorganisation (60%), alcohol and illicit substance use (60%), truancy (65%) and socio-economic disadvantage within the family unit (60%). However, upon reflecting on the factors which had the most significant contribution to their own unlawful behaviour, socio-economic disadvantage was identified by only five participants (25%) in the sample. Gang membership (55%) and the use of alcohol and illicit substances (50%) were reported as being the most influential factors motivating misconduct, based on the unique perceptions and experiences of the participants. This therefore demonstrates that exposure to a specific socio-criminogenic risk factor and the perception of the said factor as crime inducing are not necessarily synonymous, thereby highlighting the need for further research exploring the different pathways in which youth may react or respond when exposed to risk factors within their external environment.

Given this evaluation of the findings associated with achieving a greater understanding of the research participants' unique experiences with reference to the exposure and influence of socio-criminogenic risk factors on behaviour, the final aim of the study was realised as the most pertinent risk factors in each domain were identified and the factors which were perceived to have had the greatest influence on participants coming into conflict with the law, were explored. A distinction was also made between the risk factors which participants' highlighted as conducive to youth misconduct but not to their own law-violating behaviour, and those which were identified as both pertinent predictors for youth misconduct and factors which motivated them to come into conflict with the law.

In this regard, it should be noted that the findings pertaining to certain risk factors (i.e. family conflict and interpersonal violence, as well as positively orientated civic values or beliefs regarding unlawfulness) did not support the respective research expectations, nor did they correspond with existing literature and prior research. However, due to the sample size and because a control group was not used in this research, these findings only apply to youth in the sample and may not be applicable to the universe of youth in conflict with the law. The following section presents an outline of other limitations with reference to the current study.

7.2. Limitations of this study

The sample size which was used in this study may be regarded as a limitation even though generalisability is not a specific aim concomitant of qualitative research. The transferability of the interpretations made from the collected data is thus limited. Subsequently, the research results are only applicable to the participants included in the sample and should therefore be regarded as a point of departure for future research. Arguably, the depth and richness of the data collected has the potential to provide valuable understanding regarding the exposure to socio-criminogenic risk factors, despite the limited sample size. Moreover, it could be argued that the emphasis on the unique experiences and views of the participants with regard to the influence of exposure to the socio-criminogenic risk factors identified, may be regarded as valuable in terms of gaining a greater understanding of these factors and the different ways in which they may be experienced by youth.

Only participants who were fluent in English and/or Afrikaans were included in the sample. Although this may be regarded as a limitation, it should be noted that all the youth detained at the Kimberley Youth Development Centre were able to converse in at least one of the two languages and none of the detainees were excluded from participation on this basis. The researcher was thus able to conduct 20 individual semi-structured in-depth interviews, and was able to proceed with the interviewing process until data saturation was reached.

Data for this study was only collected from one province in South Africa, namely the Northern Cape. In this regard it should be noted that the Kimberley Youth Detention Centre accommodated youth from other provinces including the Free State province. Although socio-criminogenic risk factors within the community domain may be explicitly influenced by geographic area, the majority of risk factors within the domains of the family, school and peer group may arguably be regarded as more universal with several youth reporting exposure to certain risk factors irrespective of their respective province of origin, i.e. the Free State or Northern Cape.

This study focused specifically on social risk factors within the domains of the family, school, community and peer group. As indicated in section 1.5.4., there exists a dearth of international and domestic research pertaining to youth misconduct based on the experiences and perspectives of youthful transgressors themselves. Subsequently,

this study relies primarily on dated sources. As not within the scope of this study, it should be noted that genetic make-up, neurophysiological or psychological conditions were also excluded.

However, it is envisaged that this study may lead to further research conducted in the field of socio-criminogenic risk factors, together with research on individual-level criminogenic risk factors and research conducted specifically on protective factors with the potential to safeguard youth against the detrimental effects of exposure to criminogenic risk factors.

The succeeding section presents an exposition of recommendations for future research based on the aforementioned limitations as discussed in this section.

7.3. Recommendations for future research

The current study has identified a number of socio-criminogenic risk factors associated with youth misconduct, with some findings providing additional support to existing literature and prior research, while other findings provide new insights into understanding the above mentioned factors. As illustrated in the discussion presented in Section 7.1., numerous factors within the domains of the family, school, community and peer group were identified as substantial contributors to the phenomenon of youth misconduct, with gang membership (55%) and alcohol/illicit substance use (50%) being highlighted as the most prominent recurring cluster of risk factors. Further research would facilitate the expansion of the understanding of socio-criminogenic risk factors for youth misconduct and may contribute to the development of new policies and procedures, or to the modification of existing policies and intervention mechanisms aimed at conflict reduction and the successful rehabilitation and reintegration of youth in conflict with the law as outlined in the 2014/2015 *Annual Report of the Judicial Inspectorate for Correctional Services* (Judicial Inspectorate of Prisons, 2015: 48). The recommendations for future research based on the findings from the current study, are outlined in the succeeding section.

7.3.1. General recommendations for future research

Due to the exploratory nature of the current study and the limited sample size, quantitative research conducted with all-inclusive population-representative samples are recommended, as this type of research may be invaluable in attempting to

ascertain whether specific socio-criminogenic risk factors such as illicit substance abuse and gang membership are experienced as universal factors contributing to youth misconduct. As the current study was conducted with the sole aim of exploring socio-criminogenic risk factors, it is also recommended that future research endeavours include an examination of the presence and influence of criminogenic risk factors presenting on a micro or individual level. Ideally, this should include comparative studies involving an evaluation of risk factors pertaining to male and female participants, youth at different ages and levels of cognitive development and youth affected by adverse psychological conditions such as conduct/antisocial personality disorder. The utilisation of a multi-disciplinary research team including psychologists, victimologists and social workers may also be crucial in this regard.

Similar to the research of Harris (2009) which focused on the psycho-criminological risk factors contributing to youth sex offending, it is recommended that future research be conducted based on the criminogenic risk factors for the various offence categories (i.e. aggressive, economic, sexual, narcotic-related and other offences) in accordance with the classification system of the Department of Correctional Services (Peacock, 2006: 90). The current study also yielded noteworthy results with reference to the interrelationship between criminogenic risk factors and common recurrent clusters of risk factors. It is therefore further recommended that research of a similar nature be conducted on a broader scale, in order to assess the interrelated nature extant between diverse risk factors and to explore other common clusters of risk factors using a larger population-representative sample. Additionally, the inclusion of control groups is as important for future research as findings may then be generalisable to the larger population of youth in conflict with the law.

7.3.1.1. Longitudinal research

Longitudinal research may prove valuable as it could assist in evaluating the effect of short-, medium- and long-term exposure to criminogenic risk factors. Furthermore, longitudinal research may provide a greater understanding of the effect of exposure to criminogenic risk factors at different stages during life-span development, as well as generate new perspectives on the exposure to criminogenic risk factors during childhood and the subsequent effect of these factors into adulthood.

7.3.2. The family domain

Several authors (Arthur, 2007: 7; Bezuidenhout, 2013: 75; Hawkins, et. al., 2000: 3; McCord, et. al., 2001: 75; Ntshangase, 2015: 38; Shader, 2001: 6; Siegel, 2002: 158) assert that the family environment is significantly associated with youth misconduct. This assertion is also supported by the current research as several participants highlighted a lack of attachment in the family, limited communication, inadequate parental supervision, parental deviance and the absence of a male figure, as pertinent factors motivating youth misconduct. The role of primary caregivers during the early stages of development and during adolescence can therefore not be underestimated (Harris, 2009: 171).

Subsequently, it is recommended that renewed attention be given to creating mechanisms aimed at ensuring that caregivers and their offspring follow a bonding process in order to improve the level of attachment between parents and their offspring. Parental monitoring is also crucial in reducing rates of youth misconduct, and should include knowing the whereabouts of youth, knowing the peers they regularly associate with, as well as the activities in which they routinely engage (Harris, 2009: 172). Improved monitoring and supervision of leisure-time activities may also be influential in reducing the risk for youth to engage in illicit substance use, associate with deviant peers or become involved in other high risk behaviours such as sexual promiscuity.

Furthermore, adequate alternative care should be provided in cases where the family structure is not intact, or where parents are incapable or unavailable due to work or other obligations. With reference to the family domain, marriage education, parenting-skills courses and strengthening ties with members of the extended family may thus be regarded as crucial aspects with reference to the potential reduction of youth misconduct. These recommendations are supported by findings in the current study as several participants identified strengthening the bond between youth and their parents as a mechanism with which to reduce the potential for youth exposed to socio-criminogenic risk factors from coming into conflict with the law (see section 6.2.4.).

7.3.3. The community domain

In addition to the family unit, the community or neighbourhood also have the potential to significantly increase the probability for youth to come into conflict with the law (McCord, et. al., 2001: 89). A lack of bonding amongst community members, negative labelling by the community, socio-economic disadvantage and limited access to prosocial recreational activities and avenues to success, were also highlighted as pertinent predictors for youth misconduct by participants in the sample. Based on the perceptions of the participants, the creation of employment opportunities (30%), alcohol and substance rehabilitation in the community (30%), awareness campaigns aimed at educating youth about the consequences of unlawful behaviour (25%) and the creation of adequate sport and leisure facilities in the community (50%) may be instrumental in curbing youth misconduct.

Subsequently, the improvement of police-community relations and the creation of community policing forums are recommended as this may facilitate the flow of information between the police and community, create awareness regarding crime trends in the community, and act as a deterrent for youth misconduct. It is further recommended that state departments, specifically departments responsible for arts, culture and sports, become more involved at grass-roots level in order to facilitate the creation of prosocial activities in and around the community. This would be particularly relevant in communities characterised by high levels of poverty and unemployment, as the introduction and support of prosocial activities may reduce the potential for joining gangs and using illicit substances, thereby also reducing the probability for youth misconduct. The improvement of community-based services related to information, healthcare, education and psychological support may also be beneficial in this regard.

7.3.4. The school domain

A number of key risk factors were identified in the school domain. These included poor academic performance (55%), truancy (65%), dropping out of school (55%), gang-related activities at school (40%) and the use of illicit substances on the school premises (20%). Intervention at school level is thus crucial in any attempt to reduce the probability of youth from coming into conflict with the law, particularly in instances where youth are also exposed to risk factors in the family unit. In this regard, it is

recommended that caregivers become more actively involved in activities offered by the school, and in the establishment of mechanisms with which to aid disadvantaged youth such as school feeding schemes. The role of the police may also be crucial with reference to the school, as improved school-police relations may facilitate the sharing of information regarding gang-related activities in school as well as in the community, substance abuse, and contemporary crime trends.

Educators should also be equipped with the ability to identify pertinent criminogenic risk factors, in order to facilitate suitable intervention strategies to counter the potential detrimental effect of exposure to the particular risk factor(s), such as referral to counselling or to programmes related to substance abuse, anger management or life skills. Furthermore, it is recommended that youth be exposed to positive mentors at school level. Ideally, this should not fall solely on the educator, but also on other individuals such as successful entrepreneurs with the potential to become positive models for prosocial behaviour, as well as introduce and reinforce alternative avenues to the attainment of status and material success. Government departments, such as the Department of Education, may also contribute to conflict reduction initiatives at school level by frequently reviewing and where necessary, adapting policies and procedures related to school safety and disciplinary practices in order to ensure more efficient ways of dispute resolution between learners and educators, and to nurture mutual respect amongst the two parties.

7.3.5. The peer group domain

Considering the findings obtained in the current study, the peer group should be regarded as a unique and dominant agent promoting the maladaptive behaviour of youth. These findings are also supported by the research of Barnert, et. al. (2015), Dishion, et. al. (2004), Harder, et. al. (2015), Harris (2009) as well as Khan and Singh (2014). Apart from increasing the probability for youth to come into conflict with the law, the peer group was also associated with increased rates of truancy, illicit substance abuse and dropping out of school. The research participants also highlighted antisocial peer affiliation (75%) and gang membership (65%) as key factors which contributed to the commission of their unlawful behaviour.

With reference to the affiliation to deviant peers and the involvement in gangs, families, schools and communities fulfil a pivotal role as a number of risk factors in these

domains may lead to youth gravitating toward antisocial groupings. These risk factors include a lack of attachment to the family, inadequate parental supervision, economic disadvantage, poor academic achievement, community disorganisation and a need to feel a sense of belonging and camaraderie (Pacheco, 2012: 20; Peacock, 2006: 49; Phillips & Maritz, 2015: 53). At a grass-roots level, it is recommended that youth and their caregivers follow a bonding process, that parents adequately monitor leisure-time activities and that youth are presented with prosocial mechanisms with which to occupy their time.

Other important aspects could include nurturing the abilities and self-esteem of youth, encouraging positive relationships with significant others, open communication between youth and caregivers, and assisting youth to set prosocial goals and mechanisms with which to achieve them (Harris, 2009: 178). The introduction of mentorship programmes may also be crucial in this regard, as affiliation to positive peers has both a direct protective effect against socially maladaptive behaviour, as well as a buffering protective effect against exposure to other risk factors such as truancy or weak levels of parental attachment (Lösel & Farrington, 2012: 15).

7.4. Concluding remarks

In closing it can be said that the current study has generated a greater understanding of the socio-criminogenic risk factors which facilitate youth misconduct. Though the study was limited to the exploration of social factors conducive to youth transgressions, a number of pertinent risk factors were identified. These included socio-economic disadvantage, social disorganisation, weak levels of attachment to the family and community, negative perceptions regarding school, illicit substance abuse and gang membership. Based on the review of existing literature and prior research, as well as the findings obtained in the current study, it became apparent that a significant number of youth feel marginalised and trapped in the peripheries of society as a result of their exposure to criminogenic risk factors across the different domains.

The treatment and management of these risks however, appears to be an arduous and challenging task which should be addressed at various levels and civic structures. On a primary level, the role of the family as a principal socialisation agent cannot be overstated, as families should assume the responsibility of ensuring that youth are equipped to deal with the strain concomitant of daily life. Caregivers should thus

prioritise their relationship with children and ensure honest and open communication. Parents should also be actively involved outside of the immediate family environment by establishing strong ties to the community and school, in order to facilitate this process for their offspring. At a secondary and tertiary level, schools and communities should be equipped with the resources necessary to manage potential risks such as substance abuse and gang membership. This would to a certain extent also require the assistance of state departments such as the police, and the expertise of other social agencies operating within the fields of diversion, rehabilitation and reintegration of youth in conflict with the law.

Although the findings obtained in this study may not be generalised, it is envisaged that the study will lead to further research within the domain of youth misconduct, particularly with reference to research based on protective factors which have the potential to buffer against the harmful influence of exposure to criminogenic risk factors. The ultimate aim being to improve the quality and efficacy of policies and programmes available to youth in conflict with the law, as well as the reduction of harm with reference to the significant number of youth exposed to criminogenic risk factors.

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Appendix 1: Semi-structured Interview Schedule

Semi-structured Interview Schedule

Youth in Conflict with the Law: An Exploration of Socio-criminogenic Risk Factors

Participant Number: _____ Pseudonym: _____

A. Biographical information

1. Age: _____ Years

2. Ethnic group:

African		White		Coloured		Indian		Asian		Other	_____
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3. Please tell me more about yourself. What are your hobbies/interests?

Notes

4. Do you participate in any activities or programmes at the centre?

Yes		No		N/A	
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5. Could you please tell me more about this?

Notes

6. Is this the first time that you have come into conflict with the law?

Yes		No		N/A	
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7. Could you please elaborate?

Notes

8. For which offence/s are you currently serving a sentence?

Notes

9. Please tell me more about the current sentence you are serving.

Notes

10. What portion of your current sentence have you already served?

Notes

B. Family Variables

1. Please tell me more about your family life.

Notes

2. Do you have a father figure who is employed?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	Occupation: _____
-----	--------------------------	----	--------------------------	-------------------

3. Do you have a mother figure who is employed?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	Occupation: _____
-----	--------------------------	----	--------------------------	-------------------

4. Are any other members of your household employed?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	Member/s: _____	Occupation: _____
-----	--------------------------	----	--------------------------	-----------------	-------------------

5. Would you regard your family as being economically disadvantaged/deprived?
Please explain.

Notes

6. Do you feel financial challenges may have contributed to you coming into conflict with the law? Please explain.

Notes

7. Does any member of your family abuse alcohol or other illicit drugs?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	Member/s: _____
-----	--------------------------	----	--------------------------	-----------------

8. Do you feel this may have contributed to you coming into conflict with the law?
Please explain.

Notes

9. How would you describe your relationship with your family or extended family members?

Notes

10. Do you feel that your mother/father/siblings are generally affectionate towards you?
Please explain.

Notes

11. Do you feel that your mother/father/siblings are generally concerned about your well-being? Please explain.

Notes

12. Have members of your family or extended family ever acted violently towards one another/you? Please explain.

Notes

13. Do you think this may have contributed to you coming into conflict with the law? Please explain.

Notes

14. Have any member/s of your family ever committed/been convicted of an offense?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	Member/s: _____
-----	--------------------------	----	--------------------------	-----------------

15. Do you think it had an influence on your behaviour? If yes/no please explain why.

Notes

16. How would you describe the nature of parental supervision you received while growing up?

Notes

17. Do you think the nature of parental supervision you received while growing up may have contributed to you coming into conflict with the law? Please explain.

Notes

18. In your experience, what would you describe as the most difficult challenges faced in your family?

Notes

19. Please explain the affect these challenges have had on your behaviour.

Notes

20. Do you feel your family has had a significant influence on you coming into conflict with the law? Please explain.

Notes

21. If you could change anything about your family life, what would it be?

Notes

22. What would you describe as the best thing about your family?

Notes

23. Is there anything else you would like to say about your family?

Notes

C. Community Variables

1. Please tell me about the community/neighbourhood where you are from.

Notes

2. What would you regard as unique challenges/difficulties faced in your community/neighbourhood?

Notes

3. Do you think these challenges/difficulties contributed to you coming into conflict with the law? Please explain.

Notes

4. Are many people in your community/neighbourhood unemployed?

Yes		No		Uncertain	
-----	--	----	--	-----------	--

5. In your opinion, is there a lot of crime in your community/neighbourhood?

Yes		No		Uncertain	
-----	--	----	--	-----------	--

6. If so, do you think that this may have contributed to you coming into conflict with the law? Please explain.

Notes

7. According to your knowledge, are there any criminal gangs active in your neighbourhood/community?

Yes		No	
-----	--	----	--

8. If so, do you think this could have contributed to you coming into conflict with the law? Please explain.

Notes

9. In your opinion, do people in your community view crime as acceptable behaviour under certain conditions? Please explain.

Notes

10. Do you feel the way members of your community view crime has had an influence on your behaviour? Please explain.

Notes

11. Are alcohol and/or other illicit drugs freely available in your community?

Yes		No		Uncertain		Substance/s: _____
-----	--	----	--	-----------	--	--------------------

12. Are alcohol and/or other illicit drugs used regularly in your community?

Yes		No		Uncertain		Substance/s: _____
-----	--	----	--	-----------	--	--------------------

13. Do you think this availability of alcohol/illicit drugs could have contributed to you coming into conflict with the law? Please explain.

Notes

14. Would you describe your community as:

	Yes	No	N/A
14.1. Consisting predominantly of female-headed households (with absent male figures).			
14.2. Ethnically heterogeneous/diverse (mixed races/cultures).			
14.3. An area with inadequate after-school supervision of the youth residing there.			
14.4. Having too few/no opportunities to become successful.			
14.5. Having minimal positive/good role models.			
14.6. Weak kinship/friendship bonds amongst members.			

15. If you have answered yes to one or more of the above, do you feel these factors had an influence on you coming into conflict with the law? Please explain.

Notes

16. If you could change anything in your community, what would it be?

Notes

17. Are there any other factors in your community that you feel may have motivated you to come into conflict with the law? Please explain.

Notes

18. Would you say the challenges in your community have affected your family in any way? If so, please explain this.

Notes

19. Is there anything else you would like to tell me about your community?

Notes

D. School Variables

1. Did you attend school before being admitted to the centre? If so, which Grade were you in?

Yes		No		Grade: _____
-----	--	----	--	--------------

2. Did you enjoy attending school?

Yes		No		N/A	
-----	--	----	--	-----	--

3. How would you describe your academic performance?

Notes

4. How would you describe your level of motivation to attend school?

Notes

5. How would you describe your relationship with teachers?

Notes

6. Would you generally describe your school as:

	Yes	No	N/A
6.1. A crime-prone environment.			
6.2. A violent environment.			
6.3. An environment affected by gangs/gang activities.			
6.4. An environment where alcohol or other illicit drugs are used or traded.			
6.5. A harmful or negative environment.			
6.6. A place where teachers have good relationships with learners.			
6.7. A place where educators are motivated to do a good job.			
6.8. Having sufficient extra-curricular/sporting activities.			

7. If you have answered yes to one or more of the above, do you feel these factor/s have had an influence on you coming into conflict with the law? If yes, could you please explain why?

Notes

8. Do you feel school has had a positive or negative influence on your life and your behaviour? Please elaborate on this.

Notes

9. Are there any notable challenges in your school?

Notes

10. If yes, do you feel these challenges may have had an influence on you coming into conflict with the law? Please elaborate on this.

Notes

11. With regard to your school career, have you ever:

	Yes	No	N/A
11.1. Been suspended from school.			
11.2. Been involved in unlawful or violent acts.			
11.3. Been involved in an altercation with a teacher/other learner.			
11.4. Played truant/"bunked school".			
11.5. Felt like leaving/"dropping out" of school.			
11.6. Felt demotivated to attend school.			

12. If you have answered yes to one or more of the above, please explain what happened and elaborate on whether you feel this may have influenced your behaviour or motivated you to come into conflict with the law.

Notes

13. Is there anything else you would like to add regarding your past experiences with school?

Notes

E. Peer-group Variables

1. When thinking about your friends/peers, would you agree that:

	Yes	No	N/A
1.1. You had friends at your school.			
1.2. You have friends in your community.			
1.3. You spend most of your time with your friends.			
1.4. You spend more time with your friends than with your family.			
1.5. Your family disapproves/dislikes the friends you spend time with.			
1.6. You see your friends as role models.			
1.7. You feel closer to your friends than to your family.			

2. If you have answered yes to one or more of the above, please elaborate on your answer/s.

Notes

3. What do you like/dislike about your friends?

Notes

4. Please describe how you and your friends would usually spend your free time.

Notes

5. Do you have friends that are part of a gang or who are involved in gang activities?

Notes

6. Are you part of a gang or have you been involved in gang activities in the past?
Please elaborate on this.

Notes

7. Do you think your peers/friends have a positive or negative influence on you?
Please explain.

Notes

8. Do you think your friends may have contributed to you coming into conflict with the law? Please explain.

Notes

F. Conclusion of the interview

1. Which factors do feel contributed the most to you coming into conflict with the law?

Notes

2. Which factors do you think would limit the possibility or prevent other youth in your position from coming into conflict with the law?

Notes

3. What do you think are your most positive characteristics?

Notes

Thank you for your time.

Appendix 2: Information Sheet

Informed Consent Form for Participants

Youth in conflict with the law: An exploration of socio-criminogenic risk factors

Principle Researcher: Ashwill Ramon Phillips

Research Supervisor: Professor Robert Peacock

Organisation: University of the Free State

This Informed Consent Form has two parts:

1. The Information Sheet (to share information regarding the study with you)
2. The Certificate of Consent (for signatures should you agree to participate)

Information Sheet

Introduction

My name is Ashwill Phillips and I am conducting research on the socio-criminogenic risk factors which motivate youth misconduct, in order to obtain my M.A. Degree in Criminology at the University of the Free State. Socio-criminogenic risk factors refer to factors in the social environment which may contribute to the likelihood of coming into conflict with the law. These factors occur across four domains, namely: 1) the family, 2) the community, 3) the school and 4) the peer group. This study is focused on identifying and exploring the influence of these factors in order to gain a better understanding regarding the social factors which motivate youth to come into conflict with the law.

Purpose

The volume of transgressions committed by and against youth remains a challenge in contemporary South Africa, as individuals aged 12 to 22 years form part of a 'high-risk' age cohort for both contravening the law and for criminal victimisation. With reference to largescale social disorganisation, unemployment and poverty in South Africa, it is essential to gain a better understanding of the socio-criminogenic risk factors which motivate and contribute to the commission of offences, with particular reference to law violations committed by youthful transgressors. This study therefore aims to explore the specific nature of the socio-criminogenic risk factors to which youth

are exposed, in order to contribute to a better understanding of this vulnerable segment of the population within society, and to the development of efficient and effective policies and programmes pertaining to youth in conflict with the law, with the reduction of conflict as aim.

The objectives of this study are set out as follows:

- I. To explore the socio-criminogenic risk factors that may contribute to the law violating behaviour of a group of youth;
- II. To identify prominent recurrent clusters of socio-criminogenic risk factors; and
- III. To gain a better understanding of the research participants experience of the socio-criminogenic risk factors.

Type of Research Intervention

The main source of information will be in-depth semi-structured interviews conducted with each participant, through which their experiences, feelings and views on the socio-criminogenic risk factors motivating behaviour will be made clear. This information will be captured by way of audio recordings and all data will be destroyed upon conclusion of the study. A pilot study will also be conducted and will be based on in-depth semi-structured interviews with five participants from the sample population in order to test the feasibility of the research methodology and the interview schedule, enabling the researcher to deal with any difficulties before embarking on the full-scale research project. The pilot study will also serve to enhance the reliability, validity and rigour of the study.

Selection of Participants

A minimum of 20 sentenced males in the age-group 18 to 22 years will be selected to participate in the study as the majority of existing literature and prior research studies pertain to males, and because the majority of correctional clients constitute this demographic variable. Participants will also be selected on a voluntary basis. All interested youth will be invited to a venue made available by the Kimberley Youth Development Centre, at a time best suited to the participants and the centre manager. The purpose of the research, the methodology, procedure and dissemination of research results will be explained to all the potential participants.

Voluntary Participation

The selected participants will be invited to an interview which will take roughly an hour to complete. In certain instances, a follow-up interview may be necessary to clear up any uncertainties from the initial interview. Should a follow-up interview be necessary, it will take approximately 30 minutes to complete. However, the participants do not have to take part in the research if they do not wish to do so. Participants will also have the right to withdraw from the study at any point and to omit answering any questions which they feel uncomfortable with. The interviews are confidential and no names will be recorded or used in the final research report. Only the researcher and research supervisor, Professor Robert Peacock, will have access to the data obtained. Participants may also ask as many questions as necessary before deciding to participate in this study.

Risks

There are no direct risks associated with participation in this study.

Benefits

There are not any perceivable benefits to the participants. However, the data obtained may enhance the understanding of socio-criminogenic risk factors which motivate misconduct, and benefit other high-risk youth in future. The data obtained may also be beneficial with regard to informing policies on rehabilitation and reintegration of youth detained at the centre, which could contribute to the development of new programmes or the modification of existing programmes in future. Furthermore, it is envisioned that the knowledge gained from this research will lead to further research conducted at other youth detention centres in South Africa, contributing to the much needed conceptual understanding of socio-criminogenic risk factors.

Compensation

The participants will not be provided with any payment for participating in the study, and no costs will be incurred by the Department of Correctional Services.

Confidentiality

No information about any participant will be shared with any person not directly involved in the study. Any information regarding the participants will remain confidential, and all the participants will be given a participant number instead of their

name. Audio recordings of the interview will be made, but these will only be accessed by the researcher and will be destroyed upon conclusion of the research.

Sharing of Research Findings

The information gathered in this research will be documented in the form of a dissertation and scientific articles, so that other interested parties may learn from the research. However, none of the data will be attributed to the participants by name. The research results and the way forward will also be discussed with the Centre Manager.

Right to Refuse or Withdraw

Participants have the right to refuse to participate in this study. Should they agree to participate, they also have the right to withdraw at any stage of the research.

Who to Contact

If you have any questions, you may ask them now or at any other stage of the research. Please contact Ashwill Phillips (researcher) at phillipsar@ufs.ac.za or on 076 535 4422 should you want to enquire about the research project. You may also contact the research supervisor, Professor Robert Peacock at peacockr@ufs.ac.za or on 051 401 7980 in this regard. Please note that the Research Ethics Committee of the University of the Free State and of the Department of Correctional Services, who must ensure that all participants are protected from harm, has approved this research proposal.

Appendix 3: Certificate of Consent (Centre Manager)

Certificate of Consent

I have been asked to give consent to youth detained at the Kimberley Youth Development Centre to participate in this research study which will involve them completing an initial interview and possibly a follow-up interview. I have read the foregoing information, or it has been read to me. I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the study and all questions that I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I consent voluntarily to the youth detained at this Centre to participate in this study.

Print Name (Centre Manager): _____

Signature (Centre Manager): _____

Date: _____

Statement by the researcher/person taking consent:

I have accurately read out the information sheet to the Centre Manager, and to the best of my ability ensured that he/she understands that the following will be done:

1. An interview with social/care worker.
2. Interviews with each participant and a possible follow-up interview to obtain additional information or clear up any uncertainty.
3. A debriefing session upon conclusion of the study to discuss the findings.

I confirm that the Centre Manager was given an opportunity to ask questions about the study, and all the questions asked by him/her have been answered to the best of my ability. I confirm that the individual has not been coerced into giving consent, and that the consent has been given freely and voluntarily.

Name of researcher/person taking the consent: _____

A written informed consent form will also be completed by each participant willing to take part in the study.

Appendix 4: Informed Consent Form (Participants)

Consent to Participate in Research Study:

Youth in conflict with the law: An exploration of socio-criminogenic risk factors

My name is *Ashwill Phillips*. I am from the University of the Free State.

1. I am asking you to participate in a research study because I am trying to learn more about the factors which may have had a negative influence on your behaviour, or may have contributed to you coming into conflict with the law.
2. Should you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to take part in an interview in which I would like to find out more about your family life, community, school experience/s and peer group/s.
3. You will not be harmed through participating in this study and your identity will be kept secret. All the information you provide will remain confidential and will not impact you negatively in any way.
4. The Centre Manager has given permission for you to participate in this study. Even though he/she has said "yes", you can still decide not to participate.
5. If you don't want to be in this study, you don't have to participate. Remember, being in this study is up to you and no one will be upset if you don't want to participate or even if you change your mind later and want to stop.
6. You can ask any question/s that you have about the study. If you have a question later that you didn't think of now, you can ask me the next time you see me, or you can ask the Center Manager to contact me.
7. Signing your name at the bottom means that you agree to be in this study, but you can withdraw at any stage. You and the center manager will be given a copy of this form after you have signed it.

Signature of Participant

Printed Name of Participant

Date

Appendix 5: Ethical Clearance University of the Free State



Faculty of the Humanities

15-Jun-2018

Dear Mr Phillips

Ethics Clearance: Youth in conflict with the law: An exploration of socio-criminogenic risk factors

Principal Investigator: Mr Ashwill Phillips

Department: Criminology (Bloemfontein Campus)

APPLICATION FOR EXTENSION APPROVED

With reference to your application for extension for ethical clearance with the Faculty of the Humanities, I am pleased to inform you on behalf of the Research Ethics Committee of the faculty that you have been granted extension from 15-Jun-2018 to 15-Jun-2019 with the assumption that there are no major changes with regards to the study.

Your ethical clearance number, to be used in all correspondence is: UFS-HSD2016/0160

Should you require more time to complete this research, please apply for an extension again.

We request that any changes that may take place during the course of your research project be submitted to the ethics office to ensure we are kept up to date with your progress and any ethical implications that may arise.

Thank you for submitting the application for extension. We wish you every success with your research.

Yours Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Asta Rau', with a horizontal line underneath.

Dr. Asta Rau
Chair: Research Ethics Committee
Faculty of the Humanities

Appendix 6: Ethical Clearance Department of Correctional Services



correctional services

Department:
Correctional Services
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Private Bag X136, PRETORIA, 0001 Poyntons Building, C/O WF Nkomo and Sophie De Bruyn Street, PRETORIA
Tel (012) 307 2770, Fax 086 539 2693

Mr AR Phillips
Unit 1
The Den Complex
Springbok Street
Fauna
Bloemfontein
9301

Dear Mr AR Phillips

RE: APPLICATION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONAL SERVICES ON: "YOUTH IN CONFLICT WITH THE LAW: AN EXPLORATION OF SOCIO-CRIMINOGENIC RISK FACTORS"

It is with pleasure to inform you that your request to conduct research in the Department of Correctional Services on the above topic has been approved.

Your attention is drawn to the following:

- The relevant Regional and Area Commissioners where the research will be conducted will be informed of your proposed research project.
- Your internal guide will be **Ms H Oor: Area Coordinator Corrections, Kimberley.**
- You are requested to contact her at telephone number (053) 836 9164 before the commencement of your research.
- It is your responsibility to make arrangements for your interviewing times.
- Your identity document/passport and this approval letter should be in your possession when visiting the correctional centres.
- You are required to use the terminology used in the White Paper on Corrections in South Africa (February 2005) e.g. "Offenders" not "Prisoners" and "Correctional Centres" not "Prisons".
- You are not allowed to use photographic or video equipment during your visits, however the audio recorder is allowed.
- You are required to submit your final report to the Department for approval by the Commissioner of Correctional Services before publication (including presentation at workshops, conferences, seminars, etc) of the report.
- Should you have any enquiries regarding this process, please contact the Directorate Research for assistance at telephone number (012) 307 2770 / (012) 305 8554.

Thank you for your application and interest to conduct research in the Department of Correctional Services.

Yours faithfully


ND SIHLEZANA

DC: POLICY COORDINATION & RESEARCH

DATE: 14/09/2017

Appendix 7: Turnitin Originality Report

Youth in conflict with the law: An exploration of socio-criminogenic risk factors

ORIGINALITY REPORT

10%	6%	4%	5%
SIMILARITY INDEX	INTERNET SOURCES	PUBLICATIONS	STUDENT PAPERS

PRIMARY SOURCES

1	Submitted to University of the Free State Student Paper	2%
2	repository.up.ac.za Internet Source	1%
3	"Encyclopedia of Adolescence", Springer Nature, 2018 Publication	1%
4	uir.unisa.ac.za Internet Source	1%
5	Submitted to Monash South Africa Student Paper	<1%
6	Submitted to University of KwaZulu-Natal Student Paper	<1%
7	repository.out.ac.tz Internet Source	<1%
8	Sultan Khan, Shanta B. Singh. "Youth in Conflict with the Law - A Study on the Psycho- socio and Criminogenic Factorsof South	<1%